

THURSDAY, 2ND JUNE, 2016

The Parliament resumed at 9.40 a.m. pursuant to adjournment.

HONOURABLE SPEAKER took the Chair and read the Prayer.

PRESENT

All Honourable Members were present, except the Honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs; the Honourable Minister for Youth and Sports; the Honourable Minister for Health and Medical Services; and the Honourable Professor B.C. Prasad.

MINUTES

HON. LEADER OF THE GOVERNMENT IN PARLIAMENT.- Madam Speaker, I beg to move:

That the Minutes of the sitting of Parliament held on Wednesday, 1st June, 2016, as previously circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed.

HON. A. SUDHAKAR.- Madam Speaker, I beg to second the motion.

Question put.

Motion agreed to.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CHAIR

Acknowledgement of Hon. Members and Visitors in the Gallery

HON. SPEAKER.- I welcome all Honourable Members to this sitting of Parliament. I also welcome the Honourable Prime Minister on his return.

I warmly welcome members of the public joining us in the gallery, and those watching proceedings on television, internet and listening on the radio. Thank you for taking interest in your Parliament.

Breach of Privilege

Pursuant to Standing Order 134(1), I have received a notification this morning by the Honourable Attorney-General raising a matter of privilege against certain words uttered by the Honourable Roko Tupou Draunidalo in Parliament yesterday. In accordance with Order 134(2), the Honourable Attorney-General has in his notification outlined the facts and the resulting grounds on which he believes that there has been a breach of privilege. The facts and the grounds notified by the Honourable Attorney-General is as follows:

On 1st June, 2016, in the morning sitting of Parliament during the debate on the Petition to make tertiary education free in Fiji, the Honourable Roko Tupou Draunidalo uttered the words, “dumb natives” and “you idiot” which are in contravention of Standing Order 62(4) (a) and (d).

An audio recording was brought to my attention. The audio recording is quite clear, and the verbatim transcript is as follows, and I quote:

“HON. DR. M. REDDY.- If there were any toppers on the other side, Madam Speaker, they would not have raised this issue of petition, Madam Speaker. Unfortunately, they need to have some toppers there, Madam Speaker. I tell you in another ten years’ or five years’ time, there will be some toppers seated on that side but they will be part of this Government, Madam Speaker.

(Chorus of inaudible interjections)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Hey don’t call him a fool. You called him a fool.

HON. SPEAKER.- As the Finance Minister said, this is the last....

(This is the last inaudible interjections at that time)

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- I was a topper.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Point of Order, Madam Speaker. Honourable Draunidalo called the Minister for Education “a fool”.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- And he implied first in his speech calling us “dumb natives, you idiot.”

HON SPEAKER.- I have considered the matter raised by the Honourable Attorney-General and decided as follows:

Privilege is accorded to everyone in this House as a matter of right. Standing Order 133, states that:

“Every member, and any other person speaking in Parliament has -

(a) freedom of speech and debate in Parliament, subject to these Standing Orders;...”

Therefore any Member can say whatever they want in this House, but what you say in Parliament is subject to the Standing Orders. The dignity and respect of this House, must at all times, be upheld.

In this regard, Standing Order 62(4) states, and I quote:

“It is out of order for a member, when speaking, to use –

- (a) offensive words against Parliament or another member;
- (b) treasonable words;
- (c) seditious words; or
- (d) words that are likely to promote or provoke feelings of ill-will or hostility between communities or ethnic groups within Fiji.”

The use of the words; “fool”, “dumb natives” and “you idiot”, are matters which are out of order in this Parliament. The words; “dumb natives” and “you idiot”, are clearly

offensive to any Member of this House and has the potential to promote or provoke feelings of ill-will or hostility between communities or ethnic groups, and constitute a *prima facie* breach of privilege. Given the above, pursuant to Standing Order 134(2), I have decided there is a *prima facie* breach of privilege and I hereby refer the matter to the Privileges Committee for its consideration.

The Privileges Committee is directed to meet today on 2nd June, 2016 and provide its report for tabling in Parliament on Friday, 3rd June, 2016, and Parliament shall consider the Report of the Privileges Committee tomorrow.

PRESENTATION OF REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

National Research Council Bill 2016

HON. SPEAKER.- I now call on the Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs.

HON. V. PILLAY.- Madam Speaker, it is indeed a great privilege for me to present the Report of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs on the National Research Council Bill 2016 (Bill No. 5 of 2016).

The Bill seeks to establish the National Research Council and to regulate the operation of the National Research Fund and other related matters. Also, the intention of the Bill is to raise the standards and development of research. This includes development in all scientific, health, educational, heritage, industrial, technological, social and economic areas.

The Committee had called for submissions from the public through the advertisements in the two local newspapers (*Fiji Times* and *Fiji Sun*) on Tuesday, 10th May; Thursday, 12th May; and Saturday, 14th May, 2016.

As was the case with our Report tabled yesterday, due to the 30 days reporting deadline to scrutinise the Bill and report back to Parliament, the Committee set Monday, 23rd May, 2016 as the closing date for all submissions.

The Committee after its scrutiny of the Bill, resolved that an amendment should be made to Clause 15, to include the protection of people in research as well as animals. The Committee Report is a bipartisan one and contributions from both sides have resulted in the final report.

The Committee wishes to acknowledge the assistance and support of the Solicitor-General's Office and the Ministry of Education during the consultation process of this Bill.

Further, the Committee would also like to extend its thanks to all those stakeholders who participated and provided essential contributions to this process. These included the:

- Ministry of Education, Heritage and Arts;
- University of the South Pacific;
- Sugar Research Institute of Fiji (SRIF);
- Ministry of Agriculture, Rural & Maritime Development and National Disaster Management;
- Fiji National University (FNU); and

- SODELPA Parliamentary Office.

Finally I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Honourable Members, who were involved in the production of this bipartisan Report, my Committee colleagues: the Honourable Salote V. Radrodro (Deputy Chairperson); the Honourable Veena Bhatnagar; the Honourable Anare T. Vadei; and the Honourable Mohammed M.A. Dean. I also thank Honourable Ratu Sela Nanovo for his contribution and for availing himself as an Alternate Member during the Committee's meetings. Lastly, I thank the Secretariat and the Research Team for the assistance provided during the Committee's deliberations.

On behalf of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs, I commend this Report to Parliament.

Madam Speaker, at this juncture, pursuant to Standing Order 121(5), I hereby table the Committee's Report on the National Research Council Bill (Bill No. 5 of 2016), and pursuant to Standing Order 86, that it be set down for consideration by the Committee of the Whole on a future sitting day.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Please hand the Report to the Secretary-General.

(Report handed to the Secretary-General)

Pursuant to Standing Order 121(5) and Standing Order 86, the Standing Committee has now reported back to Parliament and the National Research Council Bill 2016 (Bill No. 5 of 2016) will be set down for consideration by the Committee of the Whole on a future sitting day.

Honourable Members, we will go on to the next Item on the Order Paper.

QUESTIONS

Oral Questions

Hosting of the Fijian Tourism Expo (Question No. 103/2016)

HON. J.N. KUMAR asked the Government, upon notice:

Can the Honourable Minister for Industry, Trade and Tourism explain what the Fijian Tourism Expo is, and the benefits of hosting such an event?

HON. F.S. KOYA (Minister for Industry, Trade and Tourism).- Madam Speaker, I rise to respond to the question asked by the Honourable Member and I thank her for the question.

Madam Speaker, the Fijian Tourism Expo (FTE) is Fiji's premier tourism industry event. The Expo provides an opportunity for the Fiji's tourism industry to showcase all it has to offer. The FTE is actually hosted by Tourism Fiji, and the event basically provides a cross-sectoral platform for partners in the tourism industry to engage directly with international buyers and the travel media from our key markets to develop our industry further, and to meet international travellers' demands, to strengthen existing partnerships and also to forge new business relationships.

Madam Speaker, the Expo is actually held over a three-day period where the international buyers and the media have scheduled appointments to engage with a Fijian tourism industry. This year, Madam Speaker, marks the third consecutive year of the Expo and it was the largest and most successful FTE. A total of 111 exhibitors, 153 buyers from 19 countries including Fiji, 14 international media from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, United States of America, China, India and the United Kingdom; and 20 local media representatives from about 11 media outlets, participate.

This year, the event was held at the Sheraton Fiji Convention Centre in Denarau from 3rd May, 2016 to 5th May, 2016, Team Fiji with the theme called “*Duavata*”. The theme was conceived from the idea that all partners in the industry create a stronger presence in the global market for Fiji when working together. The event was a great success, Madam Speaker, with about 110 Fijian tourism operators exhibiting over the three days, and facilitating a total of about 8,880 appointments between the buyers and sellers which was an outstanding achievement in itself. Madam Speaker, FTE has become the event through which the industry players are able to secure contracts and agreements with the wholesalers for the next year.

The other benefits, Madam Speaker, of the Fijian Tourism Expo include, but they are not actually limited towards:

- providing increased visibility in both our traditional and non-traditional markets;
- strengthening our current partnerships and forges new business relationships;
- providing an avenue to further develop, Madam Speaker, our tourism industry, to meet the international travellers’ demands;
- involving familiarisation trips where buyers and our international media partners provide media coverage and value for Fiji’s tourism destinations; and also
- providing the platform for Fiji’s local products which links other sectors of the economy to the business of tourism.

Also, performances and events are part of the programme during the Expo and it helps showcase our culture, our dance and our art, and it keeps our Fijian culture alive, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, the benefits of the FTE is that, it is not limited to the tourism industry only, but also includes the retail sector, especially arts and crafts and the Fijian crafted village that now has a permanent presence within the Expo, featured about 14 Artisans this year and received success with Fijian crafted products and establishing new market links, et cetera, and receiving orders which totalled to about \$15,500 odd, and with established retail companies and art galleries locally and abroad, and this represents about 106 percent increase, Madam Speaker, in orders from last year which was about \$7,500.

Madam Speaker, I wish to thank you for that.

HON. SPEAKER.- Supplementary question, I invite the Honourable Viam Pillay.

HON. V. PILLAY.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. Can the Honourable Minister inform the House, how does the event empower Fijians to benefit from the tourism industry?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Speaker, as I have said, the inclusion of the Fijian crafted village within the Fijian Tourism Expo complements the Fijian Government’s efforts to grow the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), and continues in making that sector the backbone of our economy. This year, like I had said, there were 14 Artisans, who were part of the Fijian crafted village and they benefitted through the sales of their artefacts, amounting to more than \$3,000-odd for the duration of those three

particular days. They were also given an opportunity, Madam Speaker, to establish new markets with the resorts and in the outer islands, into the market links with other hotels, resorts and businesses in Fiji, and also other businesses abroad.

Madam Speaker, when more emphasis is placed on the support and promotion of these micro, small and medium enterprises, the country will be able to create more jobs and more business activities that would basically increase economic growth.

Through the presence of our Artisans, Madam Speaker, the awareness raised during the course of the Fijian Tourism Expo and other potential businesses were encouraged to utilise the God-given gifts and skills and partake of the tourism business. Their art and crafts bear the Fijian crafted brand which uplifts the overall product standard, empowering the Fijian citizens and providing them with an avenue for income-generation. The brand identifies, Madam Speaker, and benchmarks Fijian quality, Fijian standards and Fijian skilled craftsmanship, representing authentic Fijian crafts and made by Fijian crafters using local Fijian materials. The specific Fijian crafted emblem differentiates our authentic Fijian crafts and contemporary pieces from handicraft made in other countries, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, for the first time, the visitors to our shores were also able to identify authentic Fijian made arts and crafts by looking for the Fijian crafted logo, prior to their purchase and the success of the Fijian crafted brand is dependent on the support from all stakeholders and especially from the private sector and other Fijians at large in other sectors, such as the construction sector and interior designers could also revive this authentic Fijian motifs in their designs and construction to spread the gospel of the 'Fijian-made, Buy Fijian Campaign'.

Madam Speaker, I proudly say that the FTE provides a great platform through its Fijian crafted village for our Artisans to showcase their handicrafts and establish new markets for their crafts and promote the brand which would further enable our SME sector to benefit from the tourism market.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I give the floor to the Honourable Viliame Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, the Tourism Expo used to dedicate 20 percent of its space to our neighbours in the South Pacific because we use to project ourselves as the hub, as the big brother and it made the South Pacific an attractive destination for all buyers from all over the world. Can I ask the Honourable Minister, who touts about Fiji being the hub; what are you doing about bringing back the South Pacific players to be part of the tourism expo that we used to do in the past?

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Minister.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Speaker, to give you a bit of background on the South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) which the Honourable Member is actually talking about, only a week ago, the SPTO hosted its third biggest event in the Gold Coast, Australia. The South Pacific Tourism Exchange (SPTE) is the region's largest travelling and tourism business to business event is largely driven by the private sector and SPTO has assisted their business by convening SPTE's international markets to facilitate direct business exchanges with quality wholesalers.

For many Pacific Island nations, Madam Speaker, tourism is the mainstay of their economies, and SPTE serves as a platform for the enhancement of national economies and thousands of Pacific people who rely on the industry basically for their livelihood. The event, again, is a one-stop shop which allows valued

international travel partners to meet the regional tourism products and suppliers from islands, and SPTE offers a convenience of meeting all Pacific Island destinations, a cost-effective platform for our Pacific Island partners to travel from all corners of the ocean. So, we do have an event that covers the Pacific people.

Now, Fijian tourism operators, Madam Speaker, through the SPTO actually receive great mileage through their participation at the SPTE, as they are able to conduct businesses, both with regional and international buyers, and from Fiji, there were 15 tourism operators or properties and tour companies that actually attended this event under Tourism Fiji's banner. Tourism Fiji, Madam Speaker, was also awarded the best booth at SPTE 2016 in the Gold Coast.

Madam Speaker, I do not think there is a requirement, we have had a successful FTE and this is Fiji's own participation by the South Pacific and regional neighbours, as the Honourable Member was saying, that forms part of SPTO and SPTE. So, I do not think it is necessary that we actually make that change with respect to FTE.

HON. SPEAKER.- I give the floor to the Honourable Alvick Maharaj.

HON. A.A. MAHARAJ.- Madam Speaker, can the Honourable Minister further elaborate as to how does FTE promote sustainable tourism development?

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Speaker, as I had said earlier in my response, the FTE is the largest tourism event that we host in Fiji, and is the opportunity to market Fiji for the global market. Through the FTE as a platform, we promote the Fijian tourism industry as the ideal destination to take full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts whilst addressing the needs of the visitors, and the industry and the environment in most communities. Therefore, this year's exhibitors, Madam Speaker, had focussed their booth towards sustainable tourism practices.

The Ministry has specifically promoted eco-tourism. I see a wry smile on the other side ...

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Make a ministerial statement.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- I see a wry smile on the other side. Then maybe you should learn.

Madam Speaker, all stakeholders working together with the sustainably, holistic attitude with the help to promote a green tourism industry which is conscious, in not only addressing the needs of our visitors but it is also for the future, and this is all in line with our Green Growth Framework, Madam Speaker.

The FTE actually helps raise awareness on sustainable practices and standards that are to be adopted by the tourism industry operators in promoting sustainable tourism and we will continue, Madam Speaker, to use such platforms to promote sustainable practices and encourage our visitors to basically partner with us in protecting our pristine environment that we have, and our rich marine life and other God-given assets which keeps Fiji apart from other travel destinations, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I give the floor to the Honourable Ratu Kiniviliame Kiliraki.

HON. RATU K. KILIRAKI.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. An interesting concept that I noted yesterday during the lunch hour presentation in regards to buying Fiji's products in the hotel industry is the concept of adoption, taking an example, the School Adoption Programme to *TC Winston*.

My question to the Honourable Minister is whether through this tourism expo, can there be a doorway for adoption process in terms of the hotel tourism providers, as adopting like handicraft supplies and all other retailers to be adopted by the stakeholders in the hotel industry, so that it uplifts the availability of the products that they sell?

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for the question, it is a very good question. There is a specific, if I may be specific about yesterday's lunch time about the Fijian grown things that we have used in the hotel.

There is a specific night, Madam Speaker, that is dedicated to food and that is our Fijian grown food. This is where we showcase our chefs who are world renowned also around all the hotels take part in all of these programmes and that particular night is dedicated to our Fijian food, so that our hoteliers are also aware of all the different local products that are available and yes, we are making a concerted effort to make sure, together with the Ministry of Agriculture, to ensure that all our hotels carry as much of our Fijian grown as possible.

If I could just relay an occasions where we had a few months ago, the Honourable Minister of Agriculture and I went through the actual menu and I think 90 percent of the menu contained our local ingredients which made the guests very happy to see, but yes, there is to be a concerted effort from the Ministry to do this.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I really need to limit the number of questions and I will give the last question to the Honourable Member that stood up first and that is Honourable Anare Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the Government for the initiative in the hosting of Fijian Tourism Expo. My question is, can I ask the Honourable Minister, they will be inviting craftsmen to exhibit. What sort of protection or IPR (Intellectual Property Rights) in their context in the Fijian made, whether they are properly documented in our country for the protection of those art and craft?

HON. SPEAKER.- The Honourable Minister.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Thank you, Madam Speaker, I think in the next session of parliament just be very wary and be of the advice that there will be something there, but of course we are. We do advise them and there will be something in Parliament shortly.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I now give the floor to the Honourable Mataiasi Niumataiwalu.

Review of Consumer Credit Act
(Question No. 104/2016)

HON. M.A. NIUMATAIWALU asked the Government, upon notice:

As the Honourable Minister for Industry, Trade and Tourism is responsible for consumer protection, do you intend to review the Consumer Credit Act, particularly, when there have been numerous complaints by consumers on the conduct of some businesses with regards to how the Act has been implemented?

HON. F.S. KOYA (Honourable Minister for Industry, Trade and Tourism).- Madam Speaker, I thank the Honourable Niumataiwalu for his question and I think it is good information for this House. By way of background, the Consumer Credit Act was put in place to provide for the rights and responsibilities of both the consumers and credit providers. It sets a guideline which lenders and borrowers have to adhere to. Furthermore, the subsequent amendments to the Act and its regulations set out compliance requirements for the drafting and execution of credit documents, as well as the requirements for a full and clear disclosure of terms and conditions, et cetera for the consumers at the time of signing and execution.

Madam Speaker, in 2012, a study was undertaken and there were some gaps recognised in the Act that required to be fixed in order to provide immediate protection to consumers of credit. My Ministry and agencies, such as the Consumer Council of Fiji have been receiving complaints from consumers with regards to credit agreements. This has led, Madam Speaker, to the Ministry undertaking a comprehensive review of the Act, with the assistance of the Pacific Financial Inclusion Programme of the United Nations Development Programme.

Madam Speaker, the main objective, yes, is to review and to develop a revised law that will address consumer protection and would also put in place provisions to discipline the actual credit providers.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. A supplementary question, and I give the floor to the Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Madam Speaker, I would like to ask the Honourable Minister; how many of those complaints have been successfully prosecuted by the Ministry?

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. The Honourable Minister.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Speaker, that is a question that is statistical in nature. If the Honourable Member requires, he can write to me and I will give it to him.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I give the floor to the Honourable Alvick Maharaj.

HON. A.A. MAHARAJ.- Madam Speaker, can the Honourable Minister provide justification for the review of the Consumer Credit Act?

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. The Honourable Minister.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Speaker, the following factors actually provide the justification for the review. The Consumer Credit Act is not to be enforced by any authority apart from currently the Department of National Trade Measurement and Standards which is responsible for enforcement.

The current Act, Madam Speaker, is very technical and needs to be simplified and reworded for ease of understanding and application. With the financial sector becoming more and more important and consumers becoming more vulnerable, the nature and type of disclosure, Madam Speaker needs improvement, and the methodology for the calculation of interest rates, fees and charges also need to be simplified and clearly laid out in the Act. There is also lack of enforcement, poor consumer awareness of

rights and the onus on the consumers to prove the breach of rights, inaccessible and costly redress mechanisms.

Madam Speaker, these are the things that will actually require or even justify the review of the Act. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I give the floor to the Honourable Niko Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Can the Honourable Minister please elaborate on what types of complaints are these, and what can we expect to see in resolving them?

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. The Honourable Minister.

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Speaker, I think I just answered part of that, but I will explain it.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- (Inaudible interjections)

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Speaker, complaints are usually, most of the time with respect to disclosure and non-disclosure, with respect to the methodology and the use of calculation of interest rates, et cetera, and every single complaint is dealt with properly by the Consumer Council. So, the complaints vary from one side of the curtain to the other, so there is quite a number of them. If I stand here and list them, then I will stand here for half a day.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- And for the last question, I give the floor to the Honourable Prem Singh.

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Speaker, a supplementary question; most of the complaints regarding consumer protection and Consumer Credit Act are referred to the Consumer Council of Fiji. May I ask the Honourable Minister, whether the Consumer Council of Fiji is regulated, and if not, why not?

HON. SPEAKER.- Will you repeat the question please, Honourable Singh?

HON. P. SINGH.- The Consumer Council of Fiji, whether it is regulated? If not, why not?

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Of course, it is! It is created by a statute. Does that answer your question?

Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I have been advised that Question No. 105/2016 has been withdrawn.

(Question No. 105/2016 by the Hon. M.A. Niumataiwalu was withdrawn)

We will now move on to the next question, and I will ask the Honourable Alivereti Nabulivou to ask his question.

HON. A. NABULIVOU asked the Government, upon notice:

Can the Honourable Minister for Education, Heritage and Arts provide details on OHS and First Aid Training of teachers, as this is a very important role that they also provide?

HON. DR. M. REDDY (Minister for Education, Heritage and Arts).- Madam Speaker, I rise to respond to the question asked by the Honourable Member, and I thank him for asking this question.

Madam Speaker, you would have noted from print media and other reports of the last two decades, there have been a number of accidents at workplace, both large and small firms included. The approach that the Ministry of Labour has taken is to get firms to have their officers trained in OHS and First Aid and, therefore, also get employers to ensure that the workplace is compliant to OHS Regulations in the country.

However, Madam Speaker, we note that while some of the large firms are doing that, but a number of large firms are not able to do that for reasons, such as cost issue, as well as turnover of staff. Medium and small enterprises, Madam Speaker, are not able to do that, and they are not interested to do that as well.

In the informal sector, there is basically an absence of knowledge on OHS as well as First Aid. We have seen a number of drowning cases, Madam Speaker. A small but significant number could have been avoided, if people knew basic First Aid skills.

Madam Speaker, early last year, the Ministry of Education decided that, at least, we could educate the current generation of students to have basic First Aid skills, as well as make them aware of OHS regulations, workplace hazards and what they could do to prevent any hazard at a particular workplace, and differentiate between the hazards and risks.

We have in our custody slightly over 200,000 students, Madam Speaker, in the primary and secondary schools. Hence, we decided that we cannot have special training sessions for all students but we can train our teachers, both the primary school and high school teachers. So, one way we thought was to get them to run their workshops from the Ministry of Labour or Fiji National University (FNU), who are running short courses.

However, we decided that we would not want to burden our teachers because they will have to pay a fee. A module in our OHS would cost about \$250, an additional burden on our teachers. A two to three day module on First Aid would cost about \$250.

Madam Speaker, we then decided to hire a qualified OHS and First Aid specialist, who in fact was a lecturer at FNU. The specialist is our staff now. We started the training Programme, Madam Speaker.

Basically, in regards to OHS, we wanted them to have knowledge about issues with regard to Basic OHS, Hazards and Risks at a Workplace and how that could mitigate those. With regard to First Aid, we want them to understand and have basic skills.

Madam Speaker, once our teachers are trained, then they could incorporate that in their teaching to the students and that is how we can capture these over 200,000 students that we have. So, the next generation of students who come out into the labour market will, at least, have basic OHS knowledge, as well as the basic techniques of First Aid. For example, for First Aid, basic techniques, such as:

- the roles and responsibilities of different parties;

- CPR for infants and adults;
- sceptical bandaging;
- fractures; and
- Stretcher exercises.

These are the basic Module 1 skills that we want every employee to understand.

On OHS, basically on different concepts and definitions, the types of hazards in a workplace, how to mitigate those hazards, Madam Speaker, and differentiate between a hazard and risk and how you could avoid and minimise the probability of risks in a particular workplace.

So, Madam Speaker, we started these workshops to ensure that these teachers will then go and train our students. Our target is that, in another 10 years' time all these teachers will be trained and then the next generation of students, who enter the labour market, would then have the basic First Aid skills and OHS. This is the plan, Madam Speaker.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- May I raise a supplementary question, Madam Speaker?

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you, supplementary question.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- It is very very worrying, indeed. This has only started last year. I expected that this has already started in every school. So, why has it come this late? What were you doing in the last 10 years?

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- 10 years, 10 years!

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Sleeping?

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Minister.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Speaker, I suggest to the Honourable Member to ask his colleague, the former Minister for Education to explain during tea time.

(Laughter)

HON. SPEAKER.- I now give the floor to the Honourable Salote Radrodro.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Madam Speaker, a supplementary question; can the Honourable Minister explain what the Ministry has done post-*TC Winston* in terms of this important topic on OHS and First Aid to schools that had been badly affected by the *Cyclone Winston*, bearing in mind the environment that they work in is still very high-risk and also bearing in mind, like it has been mentioned, like in Avea, they are using private homes as classrooms?

HON. DR.M. REDDY.- Madam Speaker, I will answer the first part but the last the part of her statement using private homes for classes, I am not aware of that.

(Chorus of interjections)

I would want to get some data on which schools are using private homes as classrooms. No, that is not happening.

Madam Speaker, what we have done is, our Education Officers who work with the Ministry of Health officials, we have cordoned off those areas which would provide risk and health hazard to students. What we have done is, the school heads are ensuring that students do not get to that particular area. That is how we are minimising any particular hazard and risk and the long term solution is to ensure that those damaged buildings are constructed.

Madam Speaker, some Honourable Members from the other side are the ones who were saying that we should have kept the students at the damaged facility in QVS and subjected them to the risk. No, Madam Speaker! We decided, that, given the level of damage that those facilities had, we cannot have students there. That is the kind of responsibility we have taken.

HON. SPEAKER.- I give the floor to the Honourable Mohammed Dean.

HON. M.M.A. DEAN.- Madam Speaker, I thank the Honourable Minister for the initiative. Actually, I have worked with the Officer and trust me, he is a very dynamic Officer. My supplementary question is, are there any plans to get more trainers in this programme?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Speaker, so much so that we would want to, but there is very limited number of expertise in the area of OHS and First Aid in Fiji. It is very difficult to get expertise on those areas, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- I now give the last question to the Honourable Leawere.

HON. M.R. LEAWARE.- Madam Speaker, in term of the roles played by teachers in the schools, there are a lot tasks that have to be conducted. Classroom-based assessments and teachers are housed in tents. How about this OHS issue, how long will they be implemented because most of these students are running away from these tents because of the heat?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Speaker, I had just explained that Ministry of Health Officials are working with the Education Officers and School Heads to see how we could minimise disruption, hazard and risks to students who are studying in tents, as well as in schools where parts of the buildings are damaged. So, we have micro level strategies, to ensure that students are not subjected to any hazards and risks.

HON. SPEAKER.- I now give the floor to the Honourable Anare Vadei.

Number of Relocated Villages - Post-TC *Winston*
(Question No. 107/2016)

HON. A.T. VADEI asked the Government, upon notice:

Can the Honourable Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development and National Disaster Management inform the House on how many villagers have been relocated following *Tropical Cyclone Winston* and have had complete housing reconstruction?

HON. LT. COL.I.B. SERUIRATU (Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development and National Disaster Management).- Madam Speaker, I rise to respond to the question asked by the Honourable Member and I thank him for his question. Let me give some background to this before I specifically answer the issues raised.

Madam Speaker, the movement and relocation of people is a global issue and that is why we had the World Humanitarian Summit last week in Turkey because there are a lot of movements and as a result, there needs to be relocation because of conflicts and, of course, disasters as well. So, let us not isolate Fiji's case, it is a global phenomenon, it is gruesome, challenging and a long process as well.

Secondly, Madam Speaker, why do we have to relocate, particularly post-disasters? We do not want to rebuild under the same level of risks. The worst case is, if there are no other options, then we will have to rebuild but then we will have to look at whether we reduce or transfer or leave and manage within that high risk area but preferably, if there are opportunities, then we need to avoid rebuilding under the same level of risks.

The responsibility, Madam Speaker, we have an Inter-agency Committee that looks after relocation and this Committee is headed by the Ministry of *iTaukei* Affairs, simply because Fijian villages are demarcated and gazetted, and they are the lead agency. The members of the Committee are Ministry of *iTaukei* Affairs Officials who lead the Committee, and assisted by Officials from the:

- Ministry of Rural Development;
- Ministry of Lands because we need to do geotechnical surveys as well, once the communities have given their approval;
- Ministry of Infrastructure, particularly on roading and water, and if need be, electricity;
- Ministry of Health because of health issues;
- Communities;
- Ministry of Fisheries and Forests; and
- Ministry of Agriculture, most importantly in terms of livelihood because in relocation, if you do not consider livelihood, most relocations will not be sustainable.

So, that is their responsibility.

The process is a long process, Madam Speaker. One, Government can identify the level of risk but in most cases we do not have to define this to our communities because they are already living and experiencing the risks themselves. However, usually in relocation process, the approval has to be from the communities. They have to indicate that they are willing to relocate.

Madam Speaker, the next question is; where do we shift them to? For that, the landowning unit is identified and then the landowning unit has to consent as well. After the landowning unit has given their consent, then the Ministry of *iTaukei* Affairs can start the process, together with the Inter-agency Committee that I have mentioned, Madam Speaker. That process involves geotechnical survey where the Ministry of Lands ensures that the areas is safe, they look at all the normal technical scoping work, Madam Speaker, and then infrastructure comes in - water, electricity, road, and then health issues, livelihood, as I have explained and thus, the membership of the Committee, Madam Speaker. It is then undertaken as a

normal development programme, again development is in partnership, responsibilities of the communities and, of course, responsibilities by Government as well.

Post *Winston*, Madam Speaker, about 63 villages have been identified and have also indicated their willingness to relocate. Out of those 63 villages, Madam Speaker, 36 villages have gone through what we call the “initial process”, where they have consented and the Ministry of *iTaukei* Affairs has moved in to do the village boundary survey which will lead to the demarcation and then the swearing in by all the landowning units. We have done that with a few villages, there are still 27 villages left to go through that process. This is work in progress, Madam Speaker, so we will look at the continuation for the 27 villages that are remaining.

On the housing reconstruction, a long-term reconstruction has taken place but the fact that, Madam Speaker, this is work in progress. Some of the villages, like Sinuvaca, for an example, they have moved into the new site, but then this is done in stages.

What we must also understand, Madam Speaker, is that, in post recovery operations, we mainly divide it into three main phases. The first phase which is the initial response, it is about saving lives. We declared 60 days emergency period, we concentrated on saving lives.

After that 60 days period, the next stage is about sustaining lives through provision of kumala cuttings, seeds and then small rehabilitation work so that they can just sustain.

Then the last phase, Madam Speaker, which is a long process, is the rebuilding of lives. That is where the reconstruction of permanent and better homes will start, Madam Speaker.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- May I raise a supplementary question, Madam Speaker?

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Supplementary question, the Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- I thank the Honourable Minister for the answers. What we are worried about is the issuing of the \$7,000, \$3,000 and \$1,500 and the plans that they have now, they are confusing the villagers, especially in Koro Island and Ovalau because they have been issued with the money to purchase their building materials. They are the ones being identified to be relocated. What sort of plans are in place for them if they build their house now, come the approval that they have to be relocated, who is going to be shifted or rebuild their homes again?

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Speaker, the communities themselves know their current position. If there are any doubts, they refer to the Interagency Committee, headed by the Ministry of *iTaukei* Affairs. However, this \$7,000 allocation that is for sustaining lives that I am talking about, it is about that phase.

We need people to be under roofs and for some, it is a permanent house but some have opted just for a temporary shelter again, for their sustenance now. The new homes, again, subject to confirmation with the Committee, that is the rebuilding process. The PDNA for the Honourable Members of this House has been completed and submitted to Cabinet as well. Right now, the process of the recovery framework is also going through Cabinet. So, that will detail the rebuilding lives concept and housing is included in that, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I now give the floor to the Honourable Samuela Vunivalu.

HON. S.B. VUNIVALU.- Madam Speaker, in regards to relocation of villages after *Tropical Cyclone Winston*, do the community or those who were affected during the Cyclone also contribute in terms of reconstruction and rebuilding?

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Speaker, thank you for the question, Honourable Vunivalu, it is indeed a very relevant question. I did indicate that for relocation, once we have gone through the process, is just programmed under any other normal Government development programmes. Like all other Government developments programme, it is work-in partnership - Government has its responsibility and communities have their responsibilities as well.

Housing, it is just normal housing, so if their houses are completely destroyed, then Government has made a commitment to that, but in other development works, and I will use Vunidogoloa as an example, Madam Speaker, when the processes were completed, then we sat down with the community. What can you offer? They have logs, Madam Speaker, and they provided their logs. It is a Government, private sector and community partnership.

The Forestry Department did the logging coup and determined the amount of logs to be sold. They provided the logs, Bahadur Ali provided the processing and the FNU students did the construction. The Ministry of Fisheries and Forests did the fish pond and the Ministry of Agriculture did the pineapple plantation. So, it is work in partnership, and the major partnership which is the main responsibility of the community is only to provide the land for relocation. That is the first and most important of all the requirements from the communities. Right now, the 27 villages that are on hold, some of them we are still to get the consent from the landowners where the relocation will need to shift to. They have a role or responsibility and they should contribute as well.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I give the floor to the Honourable Josefa Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- I thank the Honourable Minister for his reply. If Government wants any piece of land for national development, the Government will acquire the land and pay compensation. In the case of rehabilitation in the villages or extension of the village boundary, does the Ministry of Fijian Affairs pay compensation to the relevant landowner or what is the arrangement? And when the land is being taken, what status the land is held on?

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the Honourable Member for the question. We have not come across a case where the landowners have asked for compensation because it is about them. However, the Honourable Minister for *iTaukei* Affairs can provide further information on that and if the Honourable Member can direct that question to the Honourable Minister.

Madam Speaker, the short answer is, again as I have stated, this is their responsibility. If it is a development that does not include the communities as the main beneficiary and probably that is where the compensation factor comes in, but if it can be referred to the Ministry of *iTaukei* Affairs because they head this Committee.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I give the last question to the Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Speaker, the Honourable Minister just said that there are 63 applications, 27 pending and from the budget allocation last year, only two villages were named to be relocated. Now, he has confirmed that this is only for sustainability, then they will be building permanent homes and if another cyclone comes, those temporary homes will be affected as well. The problem here is that, there are many applications. Can the Honourable Minister confirm, how will the Ministry manage to attend to all these applications, given the limited budgetary allocation in the 2016 Budget?

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Speaker, let me make it clear to the Honourable Members of the House that we are responsible for building our own homes and the Rural Housing Scheme under the Ministry of Rural Development, when applicants submit their requests, that is one of the criterion. They will be asked if they can provide their carpenter. So, the initial responsibility is with the applicants themselves. We have about seven Grade A carpenters and they are distributed amongst the four Divisional Commissioners, and of course, one or two are in the Headquarters in Suva. They are the ones who will provide technical assistance to them, if need be, but for post- *Winston*, again subject to the recovery framework, most of the work will probably be sourced out to the private sector and people have already bidden for the reconstruction work, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I now give the floor to the Honourable Viliame Gavoka.

Government Borrowings – Prescribed Limit
(Question No. 108/2016)

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Speaker, this question is a reflection of our concern on the way money is being spent by the Government, especially as *TC Winston* is being used as an excuse.

Madam Speaker, my question is as follows:

The 2016 Budget Appropriation stated that Government Borrowings for 2016 should not exceed the sum of \$445,436,658.00. Can the Honourable Attorney-General, Minister for Finance, Public Enterprises, Public Service and Communications inform the House if Government borrowing is still within the prescribed limit?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM (Attorney-General, Minister for Finance, Public Enterprises, Public Service and Communications).- Madam Speaker, I rise to respond to the question asked by the Honourable Member and I thank him for his question. I can confirm to this House that Government is well within the approved borrowing limit as approved by this Parliament.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- Madam Speaker, may I raise a supplementary question?

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Supplementary question, Honourable Ratu Sela Nanovo.

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO.- We do thank the Honourable Minister for the reply given, but if that is the case, where do they finance all the other assistance that they are giving out now regarding the *Cyclone Winston*?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Honourable Member. I am not sure whether the Honourable Member was here or not yesterday when I gave the Ministerial Statement. In my Ministerial Statement and earlier on in the week, I had also said that a number of new initiatives that the Government

has been financing, for example, Help for Homes, had actually been financed by redeployment of funds which is still within keeping the limit.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I now give the floor to the Honourable Samuela Vunivalu.

HON. S.B. VUNIVALU.- Madam Speaker, can the Honourable Minister further elaborate to the august House, if you have to go to prescribed limits, would you have to come back to Parliament?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- What the Honourable Member has asked is actually a very logical question. As everyone in this Parliament should know that if any Government is going to go over the prescribed limit set by Parliament in the budgetary process, then obviously we will have to come back to Parliament.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- No!

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Yes, it is a very basic Parliamentary standing. If you are going to go over the prescribed borrowing, you will have to come to Parliament, so obviously we are within the prescribed limits that have been set by the Parliament.

Madam Speaker, the reality is that, some of the Honourable Members on the other side know this, they have been in the Civil Service. It is a feature whenever you have, for example, an unbudgeted event, you actually can redeploy funds or you can vire within the Ministry itself. So, that is precisely what has happened in the past, and that is precisely what has happened in this instance.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I now give the floor to the Honourable Mosese Bulitavu.

Work Progress with Valebasoga Sawmilling Company
(Question No. 109/2016)

HON. M.D. BULITAVU asked the Government, upon notice:

Can the Honourable Minister for Local Government, Housing and Environment, Infrastructure and Transport update the House on the progress of working together with Valebasoga Sawmilling Company to clear the Qawa River mouth of timber cut-offs and other mill debris?

HON. P.B. KUMAR (Minister for Local Government, Housing and Environment, Infrastructure and Transport).- Madam Speaker, I rise to respond to the question asked by the Honourable Member and I also thank him for the question.

Madam Speaker, the timber off-cuts is not disposed at the mouth of the Qawa River by the Valebasoga Tropik Boards Limited but rather, is used as a resource for the Company. The Company is committed to ensuring the protection of Fiji's environment by proposing proper waste management procedures within its operation, and this includes the use of waste timber as a resource for other products.

Madam Speaker, my Ministry through the Department of Environment has conducted monitoring activities at the sawmill operation areas to ensure environmental compliance and best practices at all times.

Further to that, I have a report from Land and Water Resource Management (LAWRM) which states, I quote:

“Our Dredging Operation Team have advised that they have not seen any timber off-cuts dumped at the Qawa River mouth. Please note that our Dredger is currently dredging the Qawa river mouth as part of the maintenance programme for the Land and Water Resource Management Division in 2016.”

Thank you Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Supplementary question, Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. I thank the Honourable Minister for his response.

Madam Speaker, complaints are coming from villagers who live along the Qawa River, especially from fishermen in villages close by, who rely on fishing and also another island at the River mouth which is Mali Island because there are three factories that are involved (a well-known issue); the Valebasoga Tropik Limited, FSC and FFI Malau.

My question to the Honourable Minister, in relation to the end of that question, for other debris, either liquids or solids, and whether these companies are complying with the proper sedimentation system in regards to proper ponds and proper cleaning of those ponds? Do they have a tailing dam within the factory that the Department of Environment will be able to inspect and see whether that company is complying with that?

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you, Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Department of Environment have regular waste projects. I am surprised as I had a discussion with the Honourable Member and I mentioned to him that I have the pictures here, which was given to me yesterday.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- Where is the pond?

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Can I finish? Basically he was talking about the mouth, now he is talking about the pond.

(Laughter)

But let me assure the Honourable Member that this is monitored. Thank you.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- May I ask a supplementary question, Madam Speaker?

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Madam Speaker, I thank the Honourable Minister for his reply. It seems that all these things are reactive, the Ministry is reacting to all these complaints. What is the normal process? How regularly do they check all these industries that they comply with all the environmental requirements?

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Thank you, Madam Speaker and I also thank the Honourable Member. As I have said earlier on, there is a regular audit and inspection done. Further to that, before the renewal, they will have an audit conducted again, so you can be rest assured that we do not give permit just like that, considering the environment of our country.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- A supplementary question, Madam Speaker, I just want to ask whether you understand the 'pond' there, because there is a process. When you do manufacturing, a pond is actually where the waste water comes in and then it settles and only the water flows out. That is the pond that we are trying to explain. Are they complying, are they checking those ponds?

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. That is done within their premises and that is being monitored regularly.

(Honourable Member interjects)

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you, I now give the floor to the Honourable Prem Singh.

Vatuwaqa and Stinson Parade Bridges
(Question No. 110/2016)

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Speaker, may I also say that nine months have lapsed since this question was asked in Parliament.

Would the Honourable Minister for Local Government, Housing & Environment, Infrastructure and Transport inform Parliament why construction on the Vatuwaqa and Stinson Parade Bridges have not started, despite the Honourable Minister telling Parliament in July last year that work will start in 2016?

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. P.B. KUMAR (Minister for Local Government, Housing, Environment, infrastructure and Transport).- Madam Speaker, I rise to respond to the question asked by the Honourable Member and I thank him for his question.

Madam Speaker, I do not deny stating that the works will start in 2016. At the outset, I wish to inform this honourable House that the contractor, Chinese Railway 14th Construction Company Limited has a construction contract with the Chinese Government.

Secondly, the contractor also has the implementation contract with the Fiji Roads Authority signed on 3rd December, 2015. Furthermore, I maintain that the works have started, and that does not mean that you put hundreds of workers there, diggers and cranes, but it means that the construction work has started.

These Bridges are about prefab materials. The contractors are doing prefab, in other words the construction has started, the contractor is in the country and the work has begun.

HON. SPEAKER.- Supplementary question, and I give it to the Honourable Prem Singh.

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Speaker, may I refresh the memory of the Honourable Minister that the two Bridges were closed in 2012. It is almost four years and big bridges like Sigatoka and Ba were built within four years after *Cyclone Kina* in 1993. These two Bridges have no slides and swings as he had said in July last year.

Madam Speaker, my question to the Honourable Minister is, does this not prove the incompetency in his Ministry and the FRA?

HON. SPEAKER,- Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Speaker, not at all. As I have said, the construction had started, the contractor is in the country, the agreements have been signed...

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Four years.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- ... that is all. Thank you.

Let us not talk about slides and swings, otherwise you will be in trouble.

(Laughter)

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Speaker, may I raise a supplementary question?

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Gavoka, you have the floor.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Speaker, we have to admire our colleague and the way he answers questions. He must have been a boxer, the way he sways from side to side, but can he just be specific how much will the Vatuwaqa Bridge and how much the Stinson Bridge will cost? Be specific, please.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you, Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Thank you, Madam Speaker, he is talking about boxers, et cetera, actually I have learnt from him because he normally

(Laughter)

Madam Speaker, the cost for both Bridges will be around \$30 million.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you, I give the floor to the Honourable Aseri Radrodro.

HON. A.M. RADRODRO.- Madam Speaker, I thank the Honourable Minister for the clarity in terms of the cost. I only wanted to ask the Minister; since the work has started as you mentioned, how long will it take and whether local labour will also be included in that building construction phase?

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you, Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Madam Speaker, firstly, that has been the normal practice, to utilise the local workers. Secondly, it will take 29 months to complete those Bridges.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you, last question I will give it to the Honourable Vadei.

HON. A.T. VADEI.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. I believe the Minister is mixing “words” with “work”.

(Laughter)

A simple question; whether the Government has the money to conduct those repair works?

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Minister.

HON. P.B. KUMAR.- Works with words or words with work, both, but I think you are not listening. When I speak, I want you people to hear, so that you do not waste time.

(Laughter)

As I have stated earlier, the contract has been signed between the contractor and the Chinese Government, so you do not worry about the fund, the fund is coming from China. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. We will now move on to the next Item in the Order Paper.

Written Questions

Reduction of High Level of Water Leakage (Question No. 111/2016)

HON. A.M. RADRODRO asked the Government, upon notice:

Can the Honourable Minister for Local Government, Housing and Environment, Infrastructure and Transport confirm:

- (i) if the Ministry has been able to reduce the high level of water leakage in recent years; and
- (ii) what is the remaining percentage of leakage still existing around the country and its cost to the economy?

HON. P.B. KUMAR (Minister for Local Government Housing and Environment, Infrastructure and Transport).- Madam Speaker, I rise to respond to the question asked by the Honourable Member, and I will table my answer at a later sitting day as permitted under Standing Order 45(3).

HON. SPEAKER.- I now give the floor to the Honourable Ratu Sela Nanovo to ask his written question.

Assistance to Tabuya Village, Nabukelevu, Kadavu
(Question No. 112/2016)

HON. RATU S.V. NANOVO asked the Government, upon notice:

Can the Honourable Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development and National Disaster Management advise this House:

- (i) what form of assistance would be available for the seven houses that were fully damaged as a result of the tidal wave that swept through the village of Tabuya, Nabukelevu in Kadavu on 23rd May; and
- (ii) what is the process of accessing that assistance?

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU (Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development and National Disaster Management).- Madam Speaker, I rise to respond to the question asked by the Honourable Member, and I will table my answer at a later sitting day as permitted under Standing Order 45(3).

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I now call upon the Honourable Minister for Education, Heritage and Arts to table his written question. Do you have it?

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Madam Speaker, I gave it to the office to pass it to the Secretariat. I may have a copy here.

HON. SPEAKER.- Please, table that copy.

HON. DR. M. REDDY.- Yes, I will pass it.

(Written Question handed to the Secretary-General)

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Question time is over. We will move on to the Ministerial Statements.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

HON. SPEAKER.- The Honourable Prime Minister and Minister for *I Taukei* Affairs and Sugar Industry, and Minister for Industry, Trade and Tourism have given notice to make Ministerial Statements under Standing Order 34.

Each Minister may speak up to 20 minutes, after each Minister, I will then invite the Honourable Leader of the Opposition or her designate, to speak on the statement for no more than five minutes.

There will also be a response from the Honourable Leader of the National Federation Party or his designate to also speak for five minutes. There will be no other debate.

I will now call upon the Honourable Prime Minister and Minister for *I Taukei* Affairs and Sugar Industry to deliver his statement.

Overseas Visits after *Tropical Cyclone Winston*

HON. J.V. BAINIMARAMA.- Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, I rise to make a Ministerial Statement about the overseas visits I have made in the wake of *Tropical Cyclone Winston*, to put Fiji's case for assistance in the great forums of the world. As the House will know, I made it my primary duty after *TC Winston* struck to try and comfort the Fijian people by meeting as many of our people in the affected areas face to face, to make sure that we did everything possible to meet their needs, respond to their concerns and direct all our available resources towards relieving their suffering.

Madam Speaker, as I have said before, I marvelled at the resilience of our people, especially those who had lost loved ones, and had seen their homes and their dreams destroyed in a few terrifying hours. Where I had expected despair, I was greeted with smiles; where I had expected an attitude of hopelessness and defeat, I found defiance and determination to rebuild a Fiji determined to be stronger than *TC Winston*, and better than ever.

Madam Speaker, I cannot tell you how impressed I was by the fortitude and character of our people. I went out there expecting to provide comfort and inspiration, as well as the things they so desperately needed in the way of relief supplies, but I was amazed and very moved that in many instances, it was our people who were giving me a reassurance that eventually, all would be well, and giving me the energy and the strength that I needed to return to Suva and make sure that their needs were met.

I was inspired, Madam Speaker, like never before to ensure that the FijiFirst Government continues to live up to our promise to deliver and to serve. I want to thank all our people for giving me that strength of reminding me once again of the quality of Fijian life, and of our potential to be a really great nation if we can work hard and stay positive, focussed and united.

Madam Speaker, I am the first to concede that our response to *TC Winston* has not been perfect. We had prided ourselves in 2012 that our disaster preparedness teams had done such good job that not a single Fijian life was lost in *TC Evans*, but this time it was the terrible force of *TC Winston* that overwhelmed us, the biggest cyclone in history ever to make landfall in the Southern Hemisphere.

I want to say to the nation, and especially the families who lost their loved ones or their homes that I understand their grief and their sense of loss. I wish that we could have done more to prevent this tragedy, but I honestly believe, Madam Speaker, we did the best job we could under the most trying of circumstances, and I am pleased that our development partners have been so complimentary about the relief effort. Without them, of course, as we know, we would have been in a far worse position. If *TC Winston* has had another silver lining apart from bringing us all together as a people, it has been that it has strengthened our friendships in the world.

Next week, Madam Speaker, I am looking forward to greeting the New Zealand Prime Minister, Mr. John Key, here in Suva and to thank him personally for the assistance his Government had provided,

along with countries like Australia, China, France, India, Korea, Tonga, the UAE, and of course, many more.

Madam Speaker, aside from my visits to those who had suffered from *TC Winston*'s fury, I have concentrated much on my effort as Prime Minister, to ensure the efficient delivery of our two principal cyclone recovery initiatives - the Adopt a School and Help for Homes Programmes. It has been a massive task putting these two initiatives together, and I want to place on the parliamentary record today my warmest thanks to all the people involved in getting them off the ground, whether you are civil servants or members of the private sector, this has been a unique partnership between Government and the Fijian business community to benefit our people, and I am sure that every Fijian joins me in saying, "*vinaka vakalevu*".

Madam Speaker, this leads me to the main purpose of my statement today, which is to explain to the House the central purpose of the intense round of overseas visits that I have undertaken in the past couple of months; first to China, then to the United Nations in New York, to the ESCAP Meeting in Bangkok, to India to talk with Prime Minister Modi, to the World Humanitarian Summit in Turkey, and then the Summit Meeting of the ACP in Port Moresby this week. It has been a punishing schedule, coming on top of the immediate aftermath of *TC Winston*.

Madam Speaker, these visits have been of the utmost importance for Fiji, and I want to tell this House precisely why. No Fijian, Madam Speaker, needs to be told of the gravity of the situation we faced on 20th February, because so many of us lived through it, especially those in the immediate path of the over 300 kilometre an hour winds that devastated the large part of our nation on that day.

However, it is a matter of extreme urgency that the whole world realises not only what we suffered but the future that awaits us because of the extreme weather events and rising seas caused by climate change. As I keep saying wherever in the world I speak, Fiji's experience with *TC Winston* is a lesson for the global community of the terrifying new era that is dawning on small and vulnerable nations because of global warming, more frequent and more extreme events such as *TC Winston*, and perhaps, even worse.

Madam Speaker, I am genuinely apprehensive about the future of our nation because of these threats. Why? Because these cyclones are something over which we have no control. They are coming out of nowhere with the barest of warnings and as every Fijian knows, we only have enough time to put up the shutters, get some supplies in, find a relief shelter, if our own homes are not strong enough and hunker down; then it comes. And as anyone in Koro, Vanua Balavu or Ra will tell you, it hits with such unimaginable force that you will never forget it for as long as you live.

With 44 of our loved ones dead, over 30,000 of our homes damaged or destroyed and over 200 schools and medical facilities that need to be rebuilt or repaired, I do not want to say we were lucky, but for lack of a better word, we were, because as I also keep saying, Madam Speaker, *TC Winston* spared the principal pillar of our economy, our tourism industry and we were bouncing back from this disaster reasonably well.

The Reserve Bank estimates our economic growth this year will now be 2.4 percent; IMF predicts it to be 2.5 percent and ADB predicts it to be 2.7 percent. However, my Finance Minister and I believe it will be closer to 3 percent economic growth. Yet imagine what would have happened if *TC Winston* had scored a direct hit on the whole of Fiji. Imagine if it had cut a path right through Vanua Levu and Viti Levu, as well as their surrounding islands. Imagine if it had scored a direct hit on Suva and the Nasinu corridor or wiped out the West altogether, our principal tourism areas and our sugarcane industry, the two things on which our prosperity as a nation depends.

Madam Speaker, we would rather not think about it, but we must. We must think about a worst case scenario of a direct hit on Fiji of a cyclone even stronger than *TC Winston*, and work as hard as we possibly can as a nation to prepare for it.

We must not yield to fear or despair because of these events beyond our control. We must stick together to build or rebuild better and stronger, to adapt to this new era that climate change presents with urgency and absolute resolve, to make it our number one national priority to build our resilience to similar events, and for that, we need to partner with the international community.

Madam Speaker, the Honourable Attorney-General and Minister for Finance and I agreed that as soon as we had coped with the immediate needs of our people, we needed to fan out across the world and tell Fiji's story, to gain access as a matter of urgency to the funds we need, in the form of grants or loans, and to build our resilience to climate change, the money we need to strengthen our homes, our schools, our hospitals and health centres, all manner of infrastructure, and do everything possible to ensure that our essential services, like electricity and water are not interrupted in the same way that they were with *TC Winston* and previous events.

We realise that as a Government, we need to work in partnership with the private sector, our development partners, multinational agencies and every Fijian to future proof our nation and our economy, but above all, we need the financial resources to do so. So the Honourable Attorney-General and I have travelled to every possible forum where the nations of the world gather in the past couple of months, especially the industrialised nations to preach a simple message, and stripped to the bare essentials, it goes something like this:

“Give us the financial tools we need to do the job. We did not cause this crisis, you did, the industrialised nations whose carbon emitting industries have made them rich but at the expense of the health of our planet. Because the global warming, those carbon emissions have caused has provided small nations like Fiji with the biggest threat to our survival that we have ever faced in the entire sweep of human history.

We are saying you owe it to us to help us confront the problem you have created. To strengthen our homes, our infrastructure and our economies, while at the same time cutting those emissions to give small and vulnerable nations a fighting chance.

We are saying it is an obligation you must meet because it is a moral obligation as much as anything else and history will judge you very harshly, if you don't.

Why should nations like Fiji live in constant fear of cyclones and the loss of vast areas of coastal land because of the activities of others? Why should sovereign nations, members of the United Nations disappear beneath the waves altogether to protect the lifestyles of those in the developed world?”

Madam Speaker, of course, we put this in much more diplomatic terms when we appear on the world stage but I feel that I owe it to the ordinary Fijians to put the challenge we face in the starkest possible terms so that everyone understands what is at stake. The possibility of a single cyclone wiping out all the progress that we have made as a nation, destroying people's homes and their jobs, that is what is at stake and why we are taking every opportunity to spread this message in the great forums of the world.

The Honourable Attorney-General has travelled to the United States of America to lobby the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. He has travelled to Germany to lobby the member countries of

the Asian Development Bank and I have gone to Beijing, New York, India, Bangkok, Istanbul, and lately to Port Moresby, carrying the same message; "Give us the facilities we need to build our resilience and maximise our adaptation before it is too late."

Madam Speaker, those who have followed these visits will be aware that we are trying to clear some of the impediments that currently stand in the way of Fiji accessing these facilities. Everyone knows that we are a developing country, with a Government that is working as hard as it can to improve the lives of every Fijian wherever they live. However, few people realise that we are officially designated as a middle income nation, and certainly it will be news to those Fijians who are struggling financially.

Madam Speaker, what this means is that, we are prevented from accessing certain financial facilities that would otherwise be available to us if we were designated a low income nation, and we argue that this is unfair. We are essentially being punished for our success in lifting the standards of our people at the very time that we need this finance the most, and it is critical that these impediments be lifted.

Madam Speaker, we have succeeded in putting our case to the entire international community by attending these gatherings. What the eventual response will be, we cannot yet say. The international wheels of diplomacy and finance usually move a lot more slowly than the three months that have passed since *TC Winston*, but we have at least taken advantage of the opportunity to make Fiji's voice heard and the world has been forced to listen.

We are already encouraged by the response we are getting. The World Bank, International Monetary Fund and the Asian Development Bank have indicated that they will look on Fiji favourably. We are already receiving extra funding from our development partners, such as the \$23.5 million I was given by the European Union (EU) in Port Moresby on Tuesday, 31st May, 2016. This allocation was on top of the \$65.5 million already pledged by the EU to Fiji under the National Indicative Programme for assistance for sugar and agriculture and improving access to justice, and also on top of the \$2.3 million donated in the immediate aftermath of *TC Winston*.

I again want to warmly thank the European Union for this assistance but I have to say that it is only a fraction of what we will eventually need to future-proof Fiji and our economy beyond our immediate needs after *Winston*.

Madam Speaker, the other major thrust of our international campaign has been to redouble our efforts, to put the needs for even further cuts in carbon emissions on the global agenda. We will all know that the nations of the world decided in Paris last November to cap the rate of global warming at 2 degrees Celsius above the level that existed before the industrial age, a wave of euphoria swept the world because the global community had at least agreed on something, and we went with the other Pacific nations to Paris with the Suva Declaration, calling for a much deeper cut in carbon emissions to cap global temperatures at 1.5 degrees Celsius, not 2 degrees, and while we were rejected, we are not going to give up.

Our position, Madam Speaker, is that while Paris was an important first step, we need to go much further because the scientists are telling us that a 2 degree cap is not enough to save us. Kiribati, Tuvalu and the Marshall Islands will still go under and a number of areas of coastal land in places like Fiji will be lost.

At the World Humanitarian Summit, I also pressed Fiji's case for international assistance to help us give a permanent home in a worst case scenario to the people of Kiribati and Tuvalu, our nearest neighbours. We have made this offer because we are not prepared to see our Pacific brothers and sisters even worry about what might happen to them, let alone roam the world looking for homes. We are prepared to open our hearts and our islands to them in a gesture of Pacific solidarity but we will need the help of the global community.

Madam Speaker, Fiji has also offered to host a centre for small and vulnerable states to upskill their officials to help them navigate through the climate finance bureaucracy. We have also set up a Unit in the Attorney-General's Office to begin examining the various deals and various legal implications emanating from climate change and its effect. There is a tendency to think that all these is some time down the track and that we have decades to prepare for these challenges but there are some alarming predictions that the rate of global warming will be a lot faster than most people think. We cannot afford to be complacent in an area in which some scientists say the rate of change is accelerating and the current projections of sea level rises are too conservative.

The FijiFirst Government, Madam Speaker, is determined that our nation is well prepared, this can be for whatever fate awaits us. We will continue to put our case as strongly as possible, wherever possible to keep the attention of the world focussed on the issue of climate change adaptation and securing the funds we need to place ourselves in the best possible position to weather this crisis. It is going to involve taking every opportunity to make Fiji's voice heard and I for one am prepared to go as far as it takes and do whatever it takes to get the global community to sit up, take notice and act.

I owe it as Prime Minister to the 44 victims and their families of *Cyclone Winston*. We all owe it to the 44 victims of *Cyclone Winston* and their families. And, we owe it to not only our own generation to be as well-prepared as possible but for the generations of Fijians to come. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- I now call on the Leader of the Opposition or her designate to speak in response.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you, Madam Speaker, I rise to reply to the statement by the Honourable Prime Minister this morning, and I will give the views of the SODELPA Opposition Members.

Madam Speaker, let me summarise the statement given by the Honourable Prime Minister in one word, Madam Speaker, the Hon. Prime Minister and the Attorney-General in all their trips around the world after *Winston*, they were just looking for money. Seeking assistance, Madam Speaker, that was in the first paragraph of the statement, he said "the trip is for seeking assistance," although the Honourable Prime Minister had said that he really loves the people but if the Prime Minister really loves the people then the Prime Minister must start deducting 10 per cent of his remuneration and the Government, like the Opposition has done. That is the first thing, Madam Speaker.

(Chorus of interjections)

The Prime Minister went to China, New York, Bangkok, India, Turkey, PNG last week and now awaiting the New Zealand Prime Minister, all to seek assistance..

The Honourable Prime Minister, Madam Speaker, has told us this morning that now he is trying to get finance to blame climatic change to build infrastructure in Fiji. The Honourable Attorney-General, Madam Speaker, in Germany said that due to the adverse climate changes that are coming, Fiji needs to invest into climate resistant infrastructure, Madam Speaker. That shows, Madam Speaker, that they are depending on climate finance to come and carry out development projects and development works, Madam Speaker, and the Honourable Attorney-General is on record, last week at Natabua High School, he said that the 2016 and 2017 Budget will focus on *Cyclone Winston*. Yesterday, the Hon. Attorney-General said that the five-year and 20-year plan are now put on hold because of *Cyclone Winston*.

Cyclone Winston, Madam Speaker, has been an excuse for this Government every time and the Government must tell us the truth. Now they are proposing 2.4 per cent economic growth, this is just a prediction, Madam Speaker, and climate can change that.

Madam Speaker, let me tell the Honourable Prime Minister, in last year's Budget, only \$1 million was allocated for disaster and \$2 million for climate change and the cost *Winston* has left in our country is about F\$2 billion and the Budget is nearly above \$3 billion and FRCA can only collect \$2.4 billion. You can see the inconsistency, Madam Speaker, that Government has a problem with their cash flow.

(Hon. Member interjects)

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Speaker, the Honourable Prime Minister had said in New York that another climatic event will happen in Fiji, all economic gains the country has deemed, Madam Speaker, will be washed away so Fiji is not prepared for any climatic event with such a magnitude like *Winston*, Madam Speaker. The problem, Madam Speaker, for going overseas, signing the Paris Agreement, coming back, they have a Global Green Growth Institute here with National Planning which will be preparing a proposal to GCF in Korea, will be trying to solicit funds, Madam Speaker, to come and fund all the development projects, but a sad statement was given by the Honourable Prime Minister in Papua New Guinea, Madam Speaker, when he signed the agreement with the European Union for their \$23 million, he said, "These funds will be redistributed to fund our budget". If Government is moving around overseas to look for money to finance our budget, that is a big problem, Madam Speaker. Government does not have the plan, Madam Speaker. This is poor management, Madam Speaker and the Prime Minister must understand how to run a nation, how to run a country, and you do not have a plan. He is going around to try to convince the international community to get global finance, Madam Speaker, he does not have the infrastructure here. How much has the Government gone into green industries, Madam Speaker?

We talk about re-diverting our economy, Madam Speaker, in terms of environment and economics so these policies can reflect these promises to the international community. He can be promising the international community but the implementation do not reflect, Madam Speaker, the views, the purpose, what lies in the Paris Agreement, Madam Speaker. He can go into all arenas in the international community and the world stage and preach about Fiji and what Fiji wants and tell our story but it is to start with himself, Madam Speaker. He has to have the love for this country and a proper plan, Madam Speaker. He has to have the proper people, the proper resources and the proper methods, Madam Speaker, and approaches to deal with these kind of problems.

HON. SPEAKER.- I know give the floor to the designate of the Leader of the NFP.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Thank you, Madam Speaker, I better get a few words in before it is my turn to get thrown out of this place for two years.

Madam Speaker, *Tropical Cyclone Winston* really shook up the country. Our hearts go out to all of those who are still suffering and seeking to rebuild to this day, and we thank all of those hardworking NDMO officials who have toiled day and night to get out there.

Madam Speaker, we wish to acknowledge the concession from the Prime Minister this morning that the response has not been as well as they would have liked it to be. And, records will show, Madam Speaker, that we did make pointed interventions during the 2016 Budget Session, seeking to put State resources into Disaster Management. We were outvoted of course and here we are.

Some of those interventions, Madam Speaker, were to do with reallocating resources and some of the ideas have gone into the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence, largely trying to reallocate the resources and converting what is largely a Military Force into a more effective Naval Force regarding our EEZ and Disaster Management Force if it could be converted into that, ready with its own boats and

helicopters, rations and other resources and trained personnel to do what the foreign armies came to do here for us.

If we had rethought of ourselves better and re-engineered to that, we would have done that for ourselves much better than what had transpired.

Madam Speaker, it would be interesting to know how much of the overseas trips which the Honourable Prime Minister has mentioned, have cost taxpayers and what the returns from those visits have been. It is not appropriate, Madam Speaker, but rather it is quite patronising to all Fijians for the Head of the Executive, our Prime Minister who is elected to be sent out there, doing what he is doing, essentially asking for money from the international community. That should be a job that is left to our Ambassadors and other Members of the front Bench. It is quite patronising for us to see the Honourable Prime Minister out there.

Madam Speaker, the Honourable Prime Minister talked about impediments to accessing facilities that are available, and I wish to talk briefly and this is said in the hope that it helps the Government of the day - impediments to accessing facilities.

One of the biggest impediments and I suppose 'the biggest' impediment is not having good governance, Madam Speaker. It is well known that foreign nations act on their own best interest, they could not give to flight ducks whether a country was treating its own people well or not, that is not their concern. Their concern is their own strategic interests, but of course, Madam Speaker, as has transpired in other countries that have had similar government's issues,

Those foreign countries which really come under the US Foreign Policy, they really are concerned now about having poured billions and billions of dollars into various countries and are wondering, why on earth is not our way of thinking and good governance or democracy permeating those countries and why is fake democracy flourishing inspired of how billions of dollars and they are realising that, they ought to do more in that thing.

We can help ourselves, we should, Madam Speaker, and little things we can start with Parliament. No more use of Standing Order 51, increasing the breadth of Standing Order 51 in spite of its words, and suspending Members of the House willy-nilly and giving insult and not being able to take it "cry-babies". That was something that I said right at the beginning. If we were to tidy ourselves up first and then go out, we would look better to foreign donors and much of those impediments would be removed right away. Thank you. Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I will now adjourn Parliament for refreshments and we will begin again at 11.45 a.m.

The Parliament adjourned at 11.25 a.m.

The Parliament resumed at 11.47 a.m.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, we will now resume from where we left off in the Order Paper. I now call on the Honourable Minister for Industry, Trade and Tourism to deliver his statement.

Current and Future Plans to Maximise Exposure and Success of Sports Tourism

HON. F.S. KOYA.- Madam Speaker, before I commence, I must take 60 seconds just to say something regarding the comment that was made about our Honourable Prime Minister and the love for his people and his country. Let me remind this Honourable House that our Honourable Prime Minister probably has the most love for his country and his people than any other leader that we have ever had, Madam Speaker.

HON. GOVERNMENT MEMBERS.- Hear, hear!

HON. F.S. KOYA.- And everything that he does, he does for the love of his country and his people, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, thank you for giving me this opportunity to make this Ministerial Statement on the current and future plans of the Ministry to maximise the exposure and success of sports tourism to increase awareness of the Fijian-Made brand across the world.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to inform the House that the Fijian-Made – Buy Fijian Campaign has successfully registered 1,551 products and licensed about 321 companies to date and this number is growing. In fact, the Fijian private sector has broadly endorsed this campaign.

A total of about 176 crafters are currently registered under the ‘Fijian-Made Buy Fijian Campaign’, which includes 428 odd different products. These men and women form part of the micro, small and medium enterprises sector, which contributes approximately 10 percent towards the Fijian economy.

Madam Speaker, it is a known secret that the tourism sector represents about 32 percent of the Fijian GDP. The sector directly employs 41,500 odd people, which accounts for about 12.3 percent of Fiji’s total labour force and currently collects revenue in the sum of FJD1.56 billion.

This, Madam Speaker, makes tourism the lead contributor to our foreign reserves, employment and economic growth. Through the investment put in by the Government, which enables a rigorous branding campaign of Tourism Fiji and tourism stakeholders, tourism status as our key revenue earner is maintained.

This has been possible due to the successful branding of Fiji and Fiji has been branded as a country with pristine, unspoilt environment with happy, cheerful and the world’s most hospitable people. Therefore, Madam Speaker, linking this global branding platform to the Fijian-Made Buy Fijian Campaign will create synergies and will elevate the reach of the campaign to markets beyond the Fijian borders.

Madam Speaker, domestically the Fijian-Made Buy Fijian Campaign has been very successful in encouraging Fijians to go local and buy Fijian made. It is also very encouraging to note that the regional markets are also aware of what Fijian made brand and value is. The Pacific Island markets are able to relate to the Fijian-Made brand. It is easily recognisable, trusted and the consumers have confidence that they are getting value for money.

Madam Speaker, in the area of tourism, the Fijian crafted logo has been extensively marketed to our visitors as a mark of authenticity and quality. Visitors to Fiji are able to easily distinguish between authentic Fijian crafts and imported arts and crafts because of the distinct Fijian crafted logo. Therefore, Madam Speaker, the tourism industry and tourism events, such as the Fijian Tourism Expo mentioned this morning provides the platform for promoting Fijian-made products at a global level. Through such events, we are able to reach millions of consumers in markets far and beyond. Thus, we are able to create wider awareness for Fijian-made products locally, regionally and internationally.

The Fiji Tourism Expo (FTE) as I had said earlier on this morning, is Fiji's premiere tourism industry event, which basically provides the stakeholders the opportunity to showcase their products and services, including the Fijian made products.

Madam Speaker, this year marked the third year of the Expo as I had alluded to earlier and was a great success with about 110 tourism operators exhibiting over three days and facilitating about 8,000-odd appointments between the sellers and buyers. Madam Speaker, with an annual Government investment of around \$300,000 to hold the Expo, the possible business outcomes for this are absolutely immense.

In addition to this as I have also alluded to earlier, Madam Speaker, the Fijian crafted village received success with Fijian Crafted products and achieved substantial sales, and 14 Artisans showcasing their products. The added exposure, Madam Speaker, of the Fijian made products helped establish new market linkages with the tourism businesses, retail companies and art galleries in Fiji and abroad.

Madam Speaker, sports tourism is another promotional avenue that provides unprecedented levels of exposure. Sports tourism represents the fastest growing sector in the global travel industry and involves travel outside a person's usual environment to either observe or participate in a sporting event.

Fiji has been able to create a niche in this specific market, through major international events, such as the Fiji International Golf Tournament, the World Surfing League which is the men's version, commences this Saturday, the Super Rugby and also to Interhash, to name a few.

Madam Speaker, since 2014, the Fijian-Made Buy Fijian Campaign has been promoted through the Fiji International Golf Tournament and the Tournament has enabled a total reach of approximately 400 million homes around the world through live and repeated telecast of each tournament.

Furthermore, Madam Speaker, the Fijian-Made Buy Fijian Campaign decked out the players' lounge provided the players and visitors a true Fijian effect and feel during the Golf Tournament week. This promotion will continue in the coming years. In fact, the inclusion of the Fiji International as part of the European Tour of the PGA has even provided greater exposure. The European Tour is considered as one of the most prestigious professional golf tours and the points attained by the golfers go towards their qualifiers will be more important at the Fiji International. Additionally, Madam Speaker, the Fiji International is known as a tournament where a lot of the players want to take their families away on holidays.

Madam Speaker, to complement our efforts and provide better access to our visitors, Fiji's national airline, *Fiji Airways*, launched direct flights to the 6th busiest international airport – Changi Airport in Singapore, flying twice a week. The airport serves around 100 airlines to about 320-odd cities in about 80 countries and territories worldwide. That particular airport handles more than 55.4 million passenger movements in just one year. One can only imagine the potential visitors we have through the promotion of our direct flights to and from Singapore.

Madam Speaker, therefore, it was actually crucial for the Ministry to capitalise on the opportunities available through the direct route. Hence, the Ministry partnered with Fiji Airways in the Singapore 7s events. The highlight of the event was when the Fiji 7s Team donned the Fijian-Made logo on their jerseys. This meant that the brand reached over 400 million households around the world, and might I add, at no cost.

Additionally, the Fijian Grown-inspired cocktail menu at the main gala event of the Singapore 7s was prepared by our very own celebrity Chef, Lance Seeto. From what I understand, *kokoda* was the favourite.

Madam Speaker, the Fijian-Made-Buy Fijian campaign was prominently displayed at the Singapore National Stadium during the two days tournament. The tournament was attended by an average of 30,000 spectators a day.

Madam Speaker, I am also very proud to announce that Fijian crystalized ginger and cosmetic products also secured confirmed markets in Singapore and the distribution and retail agreements will be signed soon.

Madam Speaker, Fiji International and Singapore 7s has given the Fijian-Made brand a presence in emerging and non-traditional markets as part of our diversification strategies, whilst maintaining our presence in the traditional markets of Australia and New Zealand. Madam Speaker, Australia and New Zealand combined comprise about 21 percent of Fijian exports, however, there is still room to explore opportunities in these markets.

In order to translate these opportunities into tangible results, Fiji opted to again capitalise on sports tourism as a marketing tool. Therefore, one of the region's most widely watched event, Super Rugby, has been brought to the Fijian shores. In July 2016, Fiji for the first time, will host the Super Rugby top two New Zealand Conference teams, that is, Crusaders and the Chiefs. Through this Tournament, we will be able to promote Fiji "Where Happiness Finds You" and the Fijian-Made brands as the two main brands.

Madam Speaker, we will also be promoting Fijian Grown through television advertisements on *Sky Television New Zealand* during the match, which is at prime time. *Sky Television* has a subscribership of about 860,000-odd people, as at December 2015. Therefore, this represents a viewership of 2.3 million in New Zealand alone, calculated on an average family size of about 2.7.

Madam Speaker, sporting events, I have mentioned provide unprecedented levels of exposure to Fiji not just for tourism but for the Fijian-Made brand. Additionally, Madam Speaker, the Ministry is working closely with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Fiji Association of Sports and National Olympic Committee to create the Fijian-Made branding presence during the Rio 2016 Olympics. Hence, the Fijian-Made advertisements will also be published in the Rio 2016 Team Fiji handbook, which will be circulated to all Team Fiji members and also be made available to the 206 countries participating in the Rio 2016 Games. Copies will also be distributed in the main media centre.

Madam Speaker, at this juncture, I am also proud to announce that the newest and largest international sporting event called Interhash Super Meet will be hosted in Fiji in May 2018. This is an international event for runners from around the world and is expected to attract around 5,000 participants; the biggest ever sport event that we have ever had. The event, which will be held over a period of four to six day period, will boost our visitor arrivals during our low season. This event will present another opportunity to expand the horizon of the Fijian-Made Campaign to the sports ambassadors who will come from different countries and walks of life.

Prior to the 2018 Interhash Super Meet, Fiji will also be hosting an Interhash Event Fiji which is next year, which is expected to attract around 2,000 additional visitors. We will again use both international events to promote our Fijian-Made products and develop our local business.

Madam Speaker, as we use international sporting events to promote the Fijian brand, we will see the influx of visitor arrivals connected to the sports. In this regard, we need to ensure that the benefits are filtered down to the grassroots community. Therefore, Madam Speaker, the development of the small and medium enterprises in the periphery areas where the events are held is equally as important.

The growth of community-based projects and ecotourism ventures, Madam Speaker, has a great opportunity to promote products before, during and after the sporting events. Guest and supporters to these events usually have time to engage in tours and activities offered by the host country and hence, contribute directly to the livelihoods of our grassroots communities.

In addition, Madam Speaker, village women and youth groups also take the opportunity to produce and market their products, such as the artefacts, mats, *sulus* and souvenirs for visitors engaging in a tour. The local dances, songs and even stories that are shared are part of the tour which helps invigorate our culture and our traditions. There is also a clear demonstration of how we can add value to our sports tourism by having these value-added activities.

Madam Speaker, my Ministry has actively promoted and will continue to promote the “Fijian-Made” brand to both our local and international audience through various means and especially tourism. Madam Speaker, the Campaign will continue to raise the profile of Fijian products and create patriotism amongst the Fijians to buy locally produced products and also to continue to stamp a mark on the international stage as a premium product of quality, uniqueness and authenticity.

Madam Speaker, before I actually conclude, I wish to clarify some misinformation that was spread in Parliament earlier this week, and this is with regards to the statements made by the Honourable Member with respect to the ratification of the Interim Economic Partnership Agreement (IEPA). An assertion was made, Madam Speaker, that Fiji is not benefitting from IEPA as it is called, and that only Papua New Guinea (PNG) has benefitted through the ratification of IEPA by creating a Marine Park.

Madam Speaker, let me put it on record that the information by the Honourable Member of Parliament is incorrect and it lacks merit. Fiji is a party to the IEPA and derives full benefits from the Agreement in terms of duty free-quota free market access into the European Union (EU) market, just like our other partner State, PNG. What needs to be understood, Madam Speaker, is that the two countries are completely differently endowed in terms of our resources.

Madam Speaker, in this connection, Fiji’s trade and economic relations with the EU is of utmost importance and the EU has consistently been part of the top five export destinations of Fijian products. Exports to the EU are not only limited to sugar and fish, but includes lifejackets, crystallised ginger, beauty products, ready-to-eat prepacked food, mineral water and a range of products that we are exporting where we have comparative and competitive advantage using our hub status to tap into regional and global value chain. These industries, Madam Speaker, are our sources of employment and income generation.

Madam Speaker, it should be appreciated that given our equatorial location, Fiji is on the periphery of the richest tuna grounds which lie between 10 degrees North and 10 degrees South of the Equator. This means that Fiji does not lie across the migratory routes of tuna and, therefore, Madam Speaker, possesses smaller tuna resources when compared to many of the tuna rich Pacific ACP States situated in the North.

So, when Honourable Gavoka mentions all of these things, I would hope that he do some research and get the facts correct. The richest skipjack fishing grounds are around Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and the North East up to the Marshall Islands, Tuvalu, Kiribati and Federated State of Micronesia (FSM). This information, Madam Speaker, is well known to the average person in Fiji and the Pacific.

Notwithstanding this, Madam Speaker, the FijiFirst Government has continued to encourage investment in this sector as part of our economic diversification efforts. Currently, Madam Speaker, there are 13 companies in the Fijian Fisheries Sector, that have vessels, cold storage facility and/or processing facility of which nine are (as I say) Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) compliant. This basically signifies a quality assurance accreditation and is a systematic preventative approach to food safety from biological, chemical and physical hazards in production processes that can cause the finished product to be unsafe, and design measurements to reduce these risks to a safe level.

In addition, Madam Speaker, Government has put in place various policies that are now attracting the private sector to furthering investment in their respective businesses. We are confident that our hub status, coupled with our business enabling environment, more companies over and above the current EU standard compliant companies, will invest to attain the EU quality assurance accreditation.

The FijiFirst Government, Madam Speaker, has introduced and implemented a number of pro-business investment friendly policies which has resulted in the growth of various sectors, such as dairy, textile, garment, and footwear sector. In general terms, the manufacturing sector's contribution to the Fijian economy, Madam Speaker, has increased. The private sector level of confidence in the economy is evident through their investments, and this has led to the creation of more meaningful employment for ordinary Fijians.

Madam Speaker, with regards to the Parliamentary ratification of the IEPA, there are few technical issues that Fiji and the EU are addressing, which relates to the implementation modalities of the Agreement. The issues are very much technical in nature, and once clarified and rectified, will allow for smooth implementation of the Agreement. Fiji and the EU, Madam Speaker, through the Joint IEPA Trade Committee are making every effort to jointly address these technical implementation related aspects which, once addressed, will facilitate our full ratification of the IEPA.

Madam Speaker, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to make this Ministerial Statement.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I now call on the Honourable Leader of the Opposition or her designate to deliver the response.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Speaker, I rise to reply to the Honourable Minister's Ministerial Statement.

Madam Speaker, at the outset, let me say something about the EPA (Economic Partnership Agreement) with the EU, if the EU is so important to Fiji like they say; why is it that we have not ratified this? Papua New Guinea has done it, it is all so convoluted.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.-If the World Tourism Travel Organisation is so important to us; why is it that we have not done it, like Samoa has done it? It is so convoluted, Madam Speaker.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- We met with the delegation of the EU and they told us about this. I said; “We looked quite ignorant, looking stupid, something that is on the table that can immediately benefit this country is yet to be ratified by this convoluted explanation by the Honourable Minister. It is simple, Madam Speaker, the Agreement is between the EU, Papua New Guinea and Fiji for Fiji products or Papua New Guinea products to go without quota, duty-free to the EU. Papua New Guinea has ratified it, Fiji has not.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- *Oilei!*

(Laughter)

So, that is basically what it is, Madam Speaker, it is so convoluted. I mean, the CEO of Tourism Fiji left in the middle in of night without telling anyone in May, 2014. We have been asking and he said; “He is coming, he is coming”, but it is now June, 2016. When is it going to happen? It is like IEPA, it is like WTO, and it is like everything else.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBER.- Exactly!

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Speaker, they are just riding on the work that had been carried out by many people from 1954 to today, to give us tourism today. It is not a FijiFirst initiative that can only get billions. That billion could be have been made in 2007, if there was no *coup*. That is basically what it is.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Speaker, this craftsmen initiative, can we be assured that our craftsmen are protected in terms of intellectual property rights, Madam Speaker. We are using their motives, we are using their designs, and we must be careful that all these *iTaukei* motives and designs should be protected and they are compensated in time. It is a must, Madam Speaker.

HON. M.R. LEAWERE.- It doesn't belong to the Government.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Speaker, this morning the Honourable Minister spoke about the Fiji Tourism Exchange which used to be called BFTE. I am surprised today, Madam Speaker, that the Government underwrites this Expo with \$300,000. During my time, that was a fully funded organisation by the private sector and Government did not put any money into it.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Speaker, the Honourable Minister said it costs \$300,000 by Government. We never used to pay for it. It had a body called BFTE, fully funded, privately run and they funded the whole BFTE, Madam Speaker.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- (Inaudible interjection).

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- As I have said this morning, we used to keep aside 20 per cent for our South Pacific Island neighbours. This Government came in and kicked them out; our neighbours. We bully

the Solomon Airlines, we bully all these little countries, but they look up to us. We want to call ourselves the hub of the Pacific and we treat our neighbours like that?

Madam Speaker, he talks about SPTO Trade Show, but it is like this, Madam Speaker. Our buyers are from the Northern Hemisphere, and they can only come once to the Southern Hemisphere. That is why we had the BFTE here so that they would come once and meet everyone; Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Rarotonga, Samoa and everyone – on one trip. Because of what we have done, because of our heartless attitude, they now have to come twice and sometimes they reduce number to go straight to meet with our neighbours. This is heartless, and it is not an act of a good neighbour.

Madam Speaker, on golf, as I said before, three tournaments - Denarau, Natadola and Pacific Harbour every year, \$900,000 per tournament will give us a better return. Grow our own Vijay Singh, who should be like our superstars in Sevens and has more appeal globally than this very expensive Fiji Tournament to have in Natadola where only the wealthy come and play.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBERS.- Hear, hear!

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- And you know what, at Natadola people are drinking from wells, bridges that need to be repaired and you are paying millions to these wealthy people to come and play golf for three or four days.

Madam Speaker, tourism needs better management, needs better stewardship, and the way it is happening today, it is not benefiting our people at all in the way we expect.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you, Honourable Member. I now call on the designate of the Leader of the National Federation Party to deliver their response.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. The Honourable Prem Singh does not want to speak today, I think, but in response to the Honourable Minister, he talked about the Fijian Brand and what is Fijian-Made.

Madam Speaker, I think the Fijian Brand overseas is three things predominantly; sevens rugby, the beaches and our beautiful islands, the people and the most important and unfortunately, it is the most predominant brand overseas is our bad governance.

(Hon. Govt. Members Interject)

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Madam Speaker, that is a predominant branding overseas.

Madam Speaker, the big cities that the Honourable Prime Minister says that he has gone to, Honourable Members of the Opposition also have friends and contacts who work in those big cities and they already know. This is the predominant image they have of Fiji and it is not because of being friends

with us, but as I have previously said, if we want to change our branding to remove most of our financial difficulties, we want to remove and change our brand into a one of good governance culture, I am sorry to say this to the Honourable Minister, all of that work he has put into the Fijian branding will not work if you do not fix this particular branding. And all of our financial difficulties, Madam Speaker, will not be fixed if the Honourable Minister does not do more in his Cabinet to promote the issue of good governance of which the Honourable Minister is well very familiar with.

Madam Speaker, just a talk about how this branding and how this imagery has not helped Fiji, in beginning of 1987, Fiji's economy was much stronger than Australia and New Zealand and today, Madam Speaker, after 30 years of bad governance we are going around the world begging for money. Australia and New Zealand are pouring money into post-TC *Winston* reconstruction for which we are grateful, unemployment is much lower in Australia and New Zealand than Fiji, and the weekly average wage is much higher in Australia and New Zealand than in here in Fiji.

All of the growth rates that the Honourable Minister of Finance talks about, it has not transpired in terms of unemployment and the weekly wages.

(Chorus of Interjections)

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Madam Speaker, like I had said, if we are to get rid of the imagery of fake democracy, we have to start with the Parliament, Madam Speaker. Make our Parliament more free and democratic like Australia and New Zealand where the rules, fast-tracking of very important legislation, suspending Member's rules willy-nilly, all of these and having the Honourable Members on the front bench make derogatory comments and actions towards the Opposition, pretending to be ape-like and calling it Darth Vader and making other derogatory comments to the Opposition but not having the ability to be able to be questioned about it, Madam Speaker, in what is a free and fair exchange. All of these things, Madam Speaker, give us this bad imagery and I would ask the Honourable Minister, if you fix that imagery and change what is Fijian Made and Fijian Brand that will help in most of your endeavours and will also help Fiji get over much of its financial difficulties.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- We will now move on to the next Item on the Order Paper.

REVIEW OF THE HAGUE CONVENTION ON PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, I move:

That the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence reviews the following Treaty - the Hague Convention on the Jurisdiction, Applicable Law, Recognition Enforcement and Co-operation in Respect of Parental Responsibility and Measures for the Protection of Children.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Speaker, I beg to second the motion.

HON. SPEAKER.- The Honourable Attorney-General has moved a motion to refer the tabled Treaty to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence.

I confirm that the Honourable Attorney-General has provided me with a copy of the Treaty and the Written Analysis as required by Standing Order 130(2).

Therefore, pursuant to Standing Order 130(3), the Treaty and the Analysis stand referred to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence for consideration and review. The Committee may table a report to Parliament no later than 30 days from today.

We will now move to the next Item on the Order Paper. I now call on the Honourable Attorney-General.

PARLIAMENTARY POWERS AND PRIVILEGES BILL 2016

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 85(1). I move:

That the Parliamentary Powers and Privileges Bill 2016, be now read a second time.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Speaker, I beg to second the motion.

HON. SPEAKER.- Before I call upon the mover of the motion, I remind the Honourable Members that pursuant to Standing Order 85(1), the debate is on the principles and the merits of the Bill. Further, the only amendment permitted is an amendment moved pursuant to Standing Order 85(2).

I now call on the Honourable Attorney-General to speak on his motion.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, I will be very brief in my introductory remarks.

Madam Speaker, the Parliamentary Powers and Privileges Act (Cap. 5) was enacted in 1965 and subsequently amended in 1970 and 1975. As the name suggests, Madam Speaker, the Act provides for the powers and privileges of Members and officers of Parliament.

The Act also outlines penal provisions for offences committed against Parliament, the Committee of Parliament, a member and an officer of Parliament.

In these amendments, Madam Speaker, we sought the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme, the office based in Suva, with the assistance of the New Zealand Parliamentary Council Office, they worked together with the Solicitor-General to review the Act and prepare the new law.

Madam Speaker, following the promulgation of the Fijian Constitution in 2013 and Fiji's truly democratic General Elections in 2014, it was prudent to review the Act. Given that the Act has never been amended since 1985, and since it was drafted for amongst other things, the purposes of a bicameral legislation, its provisions makes reference, for example, at the moment till today to the Senate which is the Upper House and the House of the Representatives or the Lower House which we no longer have. We simply have the Parliament.

These references of course, Madam Speaker, are now contrary to the Constitution which specifically provides the unicameral legislature. Our Parliament is a unicameral legislature and you no longer have an Upper House and Lower House, so there is no need for such references.

The Parliamentary Powers and Privileges Bill 2016, Madam Speaker, seeks to repeal the existing Act and in its place, put in place this new law that has been proposed. Like the existing Act, Madam Speaker, the Bill essentially provides for the powers and privileges of Members and officers of the Parliament.

The Bill also outlines penal provisions for offences against Parliament.

In addition, Madam Speaker, the Bill provides the right to witnesses who appear before Parliament or a Committee of Parliament.

Madam Speaker, there are various Clauses in respect of the Bill itself which I do not intend to go through as Members may want to talk about it and I could address these, if any issues are raised in my summation of the motion. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- The Bill is now open for debate.

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- Honourable Speaker, I have a question. Is this Bill going to be referred to the Committee?

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Attorney General, please clarify.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, it is Second Reading, so anyone reading the Standing Orders would know it goes to a Committee after Second Reading.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Speaker, I am just happy that the Bill is being referred to a Standing Committee. This is an Act which has been in existence from 1985 and it needs to be reviewed and I am happy that it is going there and we will make our comments in relation to that. That is my short comment in relation to this.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Bulitavu.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Speaker, I have a small contribution to the motion that is before the House, we thank that this Bill is going to the relevant Standing Committee. Also, in regards to the procedure that will be used in the issue of privileges or allegations in regards to those who have breached some privileges.

I am talking about this, Madam Speaker, because the Act itself talks about a two-year punishment that can only be given by the Court and remember, Madam Speaker, that the last time the Standing Orders can only give a punishment that is within the limitation of our Standing Orders, but the mover of the motion when we had a case that was brought into the House, had lifted the penalty from this particular Act and made it in a way of motion. So, the Committee has to deliberate on whether this will be conformed to our Standing Orders, so that the motions and the prayers that would be uttered by the mover of the motion in moving the suspension of any Member of any breach will be legal according to the Standing Orders and we should not adopt any penalty that is in the Act.

However, if that is the case, Madam Speaker, the Act says that there has to be a proper sanction from your goodself to the Attorney General which is taken as an action to the Court, Madam Speaker. That

is the procedure that has been followed. That has to be properly looked at by the Committee also, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you, I will now ask the Honourable Attorney General to speak in reply.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, we are happy that Honourable Nawaikula is happy because he is normally not very happy. Honourable Bulitavu does constantly engage in obfuscation, as I have said before. The matter is about the Bill, it is not about the Privileges Committee. He is again obfuscated the issue by saying that the supposed two years suspension is borrowed from the Act, not necessarily, Madam Speaker.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Was.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- But the point is, Madam Speaker, that is his deduction.

The point is that this Bill as Honourable Nawaikula has said, will give the Committee the opportunity to review a very old Act that is no longer relevant to the 21st century of Parliament in Fiji, and we hope that the Committee will look at this Act expeditiously.

As we have said, we have had input from the UNDP and also the New Zealand Parliamentary Council in putting together this particular Bill. It does modernise the number of provisions and offences, and also in respect to general conduct which hopefully will see a general improvement in the conduct in Parliament, in particular from the other side, Madam Speaker, and we look forward to this Bill now being put to the Committee.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you, Parliament will now vote.

Question put

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

HON. SPEAKER.- In accordance with Standing Order 85(4), the Bill has now being read for the second time. Pursuant to Standing Order 85(4)(a), the Bill will now be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights.

Honourable Members, we only have five more minutes to 12.30 p.m. At this point, we will adjourn Parliament for lunch. Please, note that lunch is provided for Honourable Members in the Big Committee Room. The Business Committee Members are also hereby reminded of our meeting in the Small Committee Room.

We will resume proceedings at 2.30 p.m.

The Parliament adjourned at 12.25 p.m.

The Parliament resumed at 2.31 p.m.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Members, we will resume from where we left off in the Order Paper.

I now call on the Honourable Attorney General to have the floor.

NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT CENTRE (AMENDMENT) BILL 2016

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, pursuant Standing Order 85(1), I move:

That the National Employment Centre (Amendment) Bill 2016, Bill No. 31/2016, be now read a second time.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Speaker, I beg to second the motion.

HON. SPEAKER.- Before I call upon the mover of the motion, I remind Members that pursuant to Standing Order 85(1), the debate is on the principles and the merits of the Bill. Further, the only amendment permitted is an amendment moved pursuant to Standing Order 85(2).

I now call on the Honourable Attorney General to speak on his motion.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, the National Employment Centre Decree 2009 came into force on 22nd December, 2009. The Decree was implemented to reform the management of employment creation services, and to provide a reformative legislative framework for the provision of quality employment services to unemployed persons and the creation of decent and environmentally sustainable employment to promote productivity, welfare and prosperity for all Fijians.

Madam Speaker, since the implementations of this particular law, there has been a need to look at it anew in respect some of the change in circumstances within the employment sector, and also to be able to carry out some of the amendments to ensure that it encompasses the growing role of the National Employment Centre, for example, the Volunteer Services that used to rest with the Ministry of Public Service, is now with the National Employment Centre.

With those few introductory remarks, the Bill is, of course, alluded to be short Bill with some of the functionary-type of amendments that is required, it has only 10 Clauses to it and we recommend that this Bill be now discussed before sending on to the Committee.

Thank you Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. The Bill is now open for debate.

I give the floor to the Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Speaker, the view from this side, is that there is a need for this to be reviewed. We are happy that this is going to the Standing Committee and, of course, we will put our input there.

The National Employment Centre law has been there for a while to help our youth and it is very important that we should review this Bill, so we are happy with it.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I call on the Honourable Attorney General to speak in reply.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- There is nothing further that needs to be added, subject to now your approval.

HON. SPEAKER.- The Parliament will not vote. I take it that it has unanimously agreed to.

Question put.

Motion agreed to.

HON. SPEAKER.- In accordance with Standing Order 85(4), the Bill has now been read for the second time. Pursuant to Standing Order 85(4)(a), the Bill will now be referred to the Standing Committee on Social Affairs.

Thank you, I will now call on the Honourable Attorney-General for the next Item in the Order Paper.

COMMUNITY-BASED CORRECTIONS BILL 2016

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 85(1), I move:

That the Community-Based Corrections Bill 2016, Bill No. 33/2016, be now read a second time.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Speaker, I beg to second the motion.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Before I call upon the mover of the motion, I remind Honourable Members that pursuant to Standing Order 85(1), the debate is on the principles and merits of the Bill. Further, the only amendment permitted is an amendments moved pursuant to Standing Order 85(2). I now call on the Honourable Attorney-General to speak on his motion.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, this Bill, its referral to the Committee seeks to repeal the Probation of Offenders Act (Cap. 22). It is in fact, a law that goes back to 1952, Madam Speaker, and there has been hardly any amendments made to it, if any

Madam Speaker, the need to obviously review this particular law, that is over half a century old must take into account the fact that we have change of circumstances, not just demographics, but our view of the law, our understanding of the law, the whole rationale behind, for example, things like what was normally called, 'probation'.

Also, Madam Speaker, in respect of how we need to deal with offenders within our criminal justice system to ensure that, for example, the rate of recidivism, in fact, decreases.

Whilst projects such as the Yellow Ribbon Programme has targeted and has been used to ensure that the rate of recidivism in Fiji does decrease, and in fact, it has yielded a number of successful results.

The law also has needs to keep up to pace in respect of the changing circumstances, and various other changes that have taken place.

Madam Speaker, the number of consultations, in fact, have been held, and as a result of the review by the Ministry for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, with the assistance of the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund, commonly known as UNICEF. The Bill, Madam Speaker, also looks at the administration of community-based corrections which offers the courts in Fiji a community-based sentencing option for the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders within our society, Madam Speaker.

Of course, under the Bill, Madam Speaker, the offender may undergo counselling, mentoring, programmes for treatment of alcohol or drug abuse, personal development programmes, education and vocational training programmes, and of course, job placement on income generation programmes too, Madam Speaker.

There are various other conditions that are attached to it that I am sure the Committee will be thoroughly examining many of the proposals and very good proposals that are being put forward under this Bill.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. The Bill is now open for debate.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Speaker, for the same reason, the debate here is limited to the principle and merits. As the House has been told, this law has been there for a long time, for a century, and there is a need to review it. We are happy that this will be referred to the Standing Committee. It will have the power to summon experts and the public to come and put their views in relation to that, and that is the view from this side of the House. So, I do not see that we have any objection to this.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. There is no opposition to the Bill, and I take it that the Bill is approved. The Parliament will not vote. I take it that it has unanimously agreed to.

Question put.

Motion agreed to.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. We just like to move the Second Reading. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER. - In accordance with Standing Order 85(4), the Bill has now been read for the second time. Pursuant to Standing Order 85(4)(a), the Bill will now be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights.

We will move on to the second Item in the Order Paper, I now call on the Honourable Attorney-General to take the floor.

INFORMATION BILL 2016

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 85(1), I move:

That the Information Bill 2016, Bill No. 34/2016, be now read a second time.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Speaker, I beg to second the motion.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Before I call upon the mover of the motion, I remind Honourable Members that pursuant to Standing Order 85(1), the debate is on the principles and the merits of the Bill. Further, the only amendment permitted is an amendment moved pursuant to Standing Order 85(2). I now call on the Honourable Attorney-General to speak on his motion.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. Madam Speaker, I would like to spend a few minutes in the introduction of this Bill for second reading.

Madam Speaker, this Bill is a very important piece of legislation. It is unprecedented in the Fijian jurisdiction. Indeed, it was a requirement under the 1997 Constitution, but no Government saw it fit to bring about such a law. Under this particular Bill, Madam Speaker, it is an encompassing of the two constitutional provisions that exists in the 2013 Constitution.

Firstly, under Section 150 of the Constitution, there is the Freedom of Information. It says, and I quote:

“A written law shall make provision for the exercise by a member of the public of the right to access official information and documents held by the Government and its agencies.”

The Bill, however, Madam Speaker, is not only about Freedom of Information, or what it is generally termed FOI. There is another provision in the Constitution, Madam Speaker, on the Bill of Rights under Section 25 where it says, and I quote:

“(1) Every person has the right of access to-

(a) Information held by any public office; and...”

Also has the right to the correction or deletion of false or misleading information that affects that person.

Many times, very basic issues like a person who may have a say a health card in CWM Hospital and sometimes you will find that their names are spelt incorrectly, and to get them to spell your name correctly or have it changed sometimes seems a very laborious task, in fact, insurmountable to be able to get that change, and because everyone refuses to do it, because once it is written, they do not want to change it. Madam Speaker, now it is your right to have that information changed, if any information held about you is held incorrectly.

So, Madam Speaker, the Information Bill encompasses...

(Laughter)

It is not a laughing matter, Honourable Member. It actually does happen and it has been happening for decades.

Madam Speaker, the Bill sets out the right to information, your ability to access to information, and then you have the division within that facilitates the request. Then, of course, your exemption from disclosure, like in all FOI Bills or laws in all countries, there are certain information that cannot be made public, and you have certain rules around that, we have then the procedures laid out as to how to access that information which will be the agency that will be responsible for it.

Madam Speaker, the Bill also sets out as to who can access information. Obviously, issues of privacy that it addresses, so if, for example, all of us on this side of the House or that side of the House, all of us in this House apply for a taxi licence with LTA, and only Honourable Draunidalo, for example, gets the taxi permit and none of the others get it, we have a right to know as to how our applications were processed. We do not necessarily have the right to know information about her, but we have the right to know about information about us, that will, of course, help us determine as to why we got the answer, 'no'. So, these are very fine lines that need to be established, otherwise you could have people prying into other people's private matters. So, these rules very clearly set that out as to how that information can be ascertained. The law does also allow for the gazetting of which agencies, et cetera, can come on to the Freedom of Information access provisions, and the law envisages that you need to do it on a stagnated basis, and that, of course, is something the Committee can also look at.

Part 3 of the Bill, Madam Speaker, sets out very emphatically the right to correction and deletion of incorrect personal information that is also set out.

Part 4, Madam Speaker, talks about the promotion of access to information and how we are going to promote that because we need to. There is generally a sense that people think they cannot access information. What we are trying to do through this particular Bill, Madam Speaker, is to create a new heightened level of transparency so people who are making decisions about individual citizens need to know whether it is an LTA, Municipal Council or Lands Department or Town and Country Planning. They need to know that any applications that comes before it, they need to know that the decision-making process, every documentation that leads to the decision-making process, they need to be accountable for and indeed can be disclosed to the applicant that is making the application. So it is very, very critical, that it creates a heightened level of transparency and indeed a heightened level of accountability. So, the rules or matters pertaining to applications will need to be dealt with in a much better and informed fashion, Madam Speaker.

Part 5, Madam Speaker, talks about the Accountability and Transparency Commission. Madam Speaker, you may recall that in the last sitting in Parliament, we had tabled the Accountability, Transparency Commission Bill that has already gone to the Committee and where in this particular Bill, it is envisaged that apart from monitoring public office holders in the Code of Conduct Bill, which now has about five different categories of people including people in this House, we need to be held accountable to members of the public through the Accountability, Transparency Commission. That Commission will also be the body through which you make applications to access information because it only makes sense to have that go through an independent body that is guaranteed constitutional independence as is set out in the Constitution to be the body that will facilitate your requests for you to be able to access information.

Madam Speaker, that is a very quick summary of what the Bill encloses or encapsulates.

Madam Speaker, we, of course, had consultations and in fact, we had a couple of consultants who worked with us from the United Nations Development Programme with the Solicitor-General's Office to

give their input because they have also been involved in other jurisdiction in the Pacific and also to facilitate such laws in their respective jurisdictions.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. The Bill is now open for debate. Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- The purpose and intent of this Bill is to put in effect our fundamental right to freedom of information, that is the right that is within the Bill of Rights and there is also the directive in the Constitution that it should be effected. We are happy that this will be referred to the Committee and we only hope that the laws in relation to this will not be limited, so we are reserving our comments and views in relation to that to the Committee. We do not see any problems in relation to this.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Madam Speaker, I agree with my Honourable colleague in regards to the stand of this side of the House but just something to clarify; can the Honourable Attorney-General also clarify in regards to, not only correcting the information about a particular person which he disagrees, incorrect on record, but also if a Bill could consider certain missing records that are there. For example, if an offer letter has been given to a particular tenant but in the records of TLTB, that particular offer letter is missing. How can that be put on record, how can the person who has that offer letter verify himself with the records that is there with NLTB when the records are missing, especially when you come into other development projects that the Attorney-General is currently doing, the Land Development projects for that \$10 million grant that is given.

There are issues where landowners are trying to evict some tenants who had offer but TLTB has given it to somebody else because they had given money to the landowners, so the records of the first person who got the offer is missing. Those are some of the issues that I would like the Honourable Attorney-General to also clarify and the types of information that can be corrected and those who cannot.

Also, other information that are there with the *iTaukei* Affairs are under oath and cannot be changed. Whether this particular Bill will also involve this information where even NLC cannot reveal to the public because it is given under oath and it has been there for many years. That is just my contribution but I support that this particular Bill be taken to the Committee and let the people give their opinion in regards to whether this Bill is appropriate in whatever ways that they think would assist them.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you, there being no other input, I give the floor to the Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, for Honourable Bilitavu's information, I am sure he knows this, as an upstanding lawyer that the Bill of Rights provision relates to individual rights. So, if your information pertaining to you is held incorrectly or has been deleted or should be deleted, then you have through this Bill, once it becomes law, the right to have that corrected, in respect of you as an individual. Similarly, your ability to access information is in relation to you as an individual, not my uncle's but mine, not my sister's but mine. So, it is a very individual right and also, Madam Speaker, that is very critical to ensure that happens because it is also to do with privacy, and I am sure the Committee will look at it.

Honourable Bilitavu is referring to other matters in respect of the holding of public records or company records, whatever the case maybe, which has a different avenue but the Bills specifically is restricted to individual rights and that is what it relates to.

Madam Speaker, I think this Bill actually has been a long time coming frankly because as I highlighted earlier that the 1997 Constitution and the provision that no Government has actually brought such a Bill to Parliament. The 2013 provision in the Constitution which we now have brought this Bill. We have been talking about freedom of information or access to information for, in fact, over a decade, if not more, Madam Speaker.

Today, I think it is quite an auspicious day because we are tabling a Bill in this Parliament pertaining to an issue that has been languishing within the mains of political unwillingness to introduce such a Bill. I am quite happy to say that the FijiFirst Government has seen it fit to introduce this because as we had highlighted earlier on, it creates a completely new level and heightened level of accountability, in particular public officials who make decisions about individual citizens in this country.

Many of the people, Madam Speaker, post 5th December, 2006 were queuing up outside the Honourable Prime Minister's Office had to do with decades of neglect of individual people's applications, not hearing back from them or decision made by or against them with no level of accountability whatsoever. When you have a law that tells the civil servant or any public official that if you are going to process somebody's licence or application or information or even handling their health records that they know that you can also have access to that, and how you arrive at that decision, they will always make sure that they will always try and do the right thing. That is very critical, and to have that knowledge as a civil servant or public official, that, that is going to happen, it will mean that they will hopefully, follow the laws and procedures and processes that has been laid out. It directly has a positive impact in cutting down corruption, directly has an impact in cutting down any form of undue influence by a third party, nepotism, decisions made because of ethnic considerations, provincial considerations, religious considerations, gender consideration, whatever the case may be.

So, Madam Speaker, we hope that the Committee that this Bill is referred to deals with it in an expeditious manner because the sooner that we have this Bill become a law, it will heighten the rights that will be available to individual citizens of our beloved country. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- I thank Honourable Members for a general agreement on this motion.

HON. SPEAKER.- In accordance with Standing Order 85, clause 4, the Bill has now been read for the second time, pursuant to Standing Order 85(4)(a), the Bill will now be referred to the Standing Committee on Justice, Law and Human Rights.

PASSPORTS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2016

HON. SPEAKER.- Pursuant to the resolution on Monday 30th May, 2016, the Passports (Amendment) Bill 2016 will be debated and voted upon today. Debate will be limited to one hour and I now call upon the Honourable Attorney-General to move his motion.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, pursuant to the resolution of Parliament on 30th May, 2016, I move:

That the Passports (Amendment) Bill 2016, Bill No. 32 of 2016, be debated and voted upon and be passed.

HON. LT. COL. I.B. SERUIRATU.- Madam Speaker, I beg to second the motion.

HON. SPEAKER.- I now call on the Honourable Attorney-General to speak on his motion.

HON. A.SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, I will be brief as we have highlighted the key reasons as to why we wanted this amendment to the Passport Act to be passed. Essentially, it is to facilitate the granting of a special category of passport to our peacekeepers where ever they are in the world to ensure that they are able to travel a lot more freely with official documentation across countries that maybe at odds with each other.

Madam Speaker, we see that generally in the Middle East, that may have also arise where ever for example, our Police are serving in Africa and various other parts of the world. The Bill is quite short in the sense which has laid out very clearly the provisions that relate to the issuance of an official passport.

We will see that it has a definition of Discipline Forces which is laid out in Clause 2. It also then says as to how the official passport must be used, under what circumstances it can be used, Madam Speaker, and of course, when returning peacekeepers come back home, they need to handover the official passports, so they have their ordinary passports with them and, of course, lays out the offence. There are nine Clauses that are linked to it, Madam Speaker.

A question was asked on Monday, as to why these peacekeepers are not given UN passports. The UN passports, Madam Speaker, are given to officials of the United Nations, not to peacekeepers. The peacekeepers are contributing, as part of the general peacekeeping duties, but they are not officials of the United Nations *per se*.

With those introductory remarks, I now recommend that we debate this Bill and vote upon it. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. The Bill is now open for debate. The Honourable Ratu Isoa Tikoca.

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- Madam Speaker, this is most atrocious and covert in nature. The United Nations, if you serve in Lebanon, there is an agreement between the Lebanese and United Nations that you use the common border, you use the UN identity cards. UNIFIL that is receivable. Why are you travelling to Syria? Who sent you to Russia? Why are you creating that; because it is not normal? United Nations tasked you a responsibility to look after that place and accessible to the common borders.

Why are you allowing soldiers, police, and prisoners under disciplinary force to go anywhere? If anyone does that, that is something covert, of course, under the Blue Beret, you are conducting illegal activities. You seek this Parliament to endorse that, how strange that you brought this Parliament to that certain level. What happens if this guy that holds the passport that you are trying to promote now and got killed in an area of operations that does not belong to him? He is not going to be provided for any compensation by United Nations, nor probably your government, because he is actually operating in an area that he is not designated to perform.

I want to emphasise the covertness of this idea. You allowed our people to cross over other areas, sending them to areas that are not friendly also to this nation, nor friendly to either side of the borders that they are deployed to.

United Nations, as I know, will never agree to this covert exercise. This Parliament should not allow this to happen, as it is illegal and it will lead to United Nations terminating Fiji's contributing to United Nations, even that this august House is to accept that and discuss this matter in this House.

Never in the history that this country, especially your government, is using United Nations in this way; the covert operation under the Blue Beret on a different mission. You allow this, Madam Speaker, you

allow our UN members to enter terrorists based ISIS areas and all the type of establishment that we do not and we should not support. The protocol under UN plans anything that will not support this kind of operation or this kind of issuing of passports. You can either use your ID card, and if not, do not enter an area of operation that you are not assigned to. This is not a tourist mission, using United Nations fund to go around the world, seeking for additional ammunition, additional arms and threatening our nation, cut it out! No way that this country should not even entertain discussing this motion!

UN will not allow this because of its covert intention, I beg also Members of this House, all to say, 'No, no' to this very illegal Bill.

(Chorus of interjections from both sides of the House)

HON. RATU I.D. TIKOCA.- The Honourable Attorney-General, stop taking this nation to disrepute. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Honourable Bulitavu

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Thank you. Madam Speaker, we all agree with the background that is in the Bill, the hostility and that region of the world and Fiji's contribution to peacekeeping in the Middle East. My Honourable colleague has just said the practice that used to be there, but this is a very new idea altogether. It will be an official passport to be issued to the members of the disciplinary forces, once they go into a duty, once they come back, they will return the passport. This passport can only be taken away or seized when a particular soldier is no longer a member of the disciplined force, that is the validity or the official use of this passport. However, when you read this particular Bill, Madam Speaker, you will see that the Director of Immigration will prescribe the list of countries where this passport can be used.

One of the reasons that is given in the Bill is for administrative purposes, getting supplies across the borders for our troops - travelling across borders use. The problem will come if our soldiers are not accepted by the country that they are going into. If they get the Israel's stamp, they cannot enter into Syria or Lebanon and vice versa, Madam Speaker.

However, the Honourable Attorney-General has not explained to the House whether this particular passport will also be stamped, because if you get the stamp from those countries, the same thing will happen again because Israel might not accept Lebanese stamped passports, the visa that will be on the passport. So, basically we are dealing with the same thing.

However, the other thing, Madam Speaker, if you look back into how our troops have performed in the last few years in the Middle East, we saw that 44 of our troops were taken hostage by a terrorist organisation called *Al-Nusra*, we had also seen the negotiations where the United Nations (UN) was involved with our Commander, RFMF who were there for the release of our troops.

Given that there will be no UN cover in this passport because it will be issued by the Fiji Government, what level of negotiations we can have in order to bring this terrorism into the negotiation table and also to release our troops because that has happened and this can open up our Fijian troops who was serving in the Middle East not to be peacekeepers anymore but to be victims for terrorists to negotiate large sums of ransom?

These are issues that need to be properly reconsidered, but I want to ask the Honourable Attorney-General because he has never given a background into how the Director of Immigration will come up with

a list of countries and how the Government will negotiate with those countries that the prescribed countries in the list, that is in this law or in the immigration will comply with that particular passport.

That is the issue, Madam Speaker. If any problem happens, if one of the countries that is prescribed by the Director of Immigration does not comply, what will happen? These are the laxity in the background that the Honourable Attorney-General has not given us to make it clear to us on how our Fijian troops will be issued this official passport but they will be no problem.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you, I give the floor to the Honourable Prem Singh.

HON. P. SINGH.- Thank you Madam Speaker. This is some of the extra ordinary amendment. The Honourable Attorney-General was presenting the Bill, he did mention from the Explanatory Notes why he is doing it. Probably for purposes of clarification, he is not clarifying how it will make easier for our peacekeepers to travel between the Arab countries instead of Israel or vice versa.

Madam Speaker to have a Fijian Official passport, the passport on top has a silky area, the blue passport. So, this amendment to the Passport Act, what it really does is, creates an avenue where another passport, an official passport, can be issued to a particular group of people, comprising of the peacekeepers from the RFMF, Police and the Fiji Prison Service.

It will be the first time when individual Fiji citizens will be in possession of two passports.

(Hon. Member interjects)

Diplomatic passport is another passport but is confined to certain members of the public and this will help the Diplomatic passport.

Madam Speaker, the pertinent question that I want to ask is; why our peacekeepers face visa restrictions when we have diplomatic missions all over the place? What is more supreme? A blue Fijian official passport or the blue beret and the banner of the United Nations, any peacekeeper should always wear the blue beret and the band at all times.

Madam Speaker, what is the need for another passport in view of this, unless these clarifications are sorted out? That is my contribution.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you, I give the floor to the Honourable Nawaikula.

HON. N NAWAIKULA.- Firstly, there is a confusion in the name that is used here. If this is Fijian official, then what will happen to the Fiji passport? Which of those will be official? That is an ambiguity that has to be resolved. The point that I wish to say is that, this matter I simply fail to see how this amendment will serve the problem that it wishes to or to put it simply, are the issuance of a new passport will allow the troops to move freely between hostile nations? The problem has been compounded by the fact that this has come here under Standing Order 51. If this were referred to a Standing Committee, we would have that benefit of second opinion from an expert in relation to this, but we have done away with that and we are left with this.

So, from this one, the problem that it wants to address is that, coming from Israel for example going to an Arab States, the Arab States will not accept the stamping of Israel on that passport, but this will not take it away. Every one of us here travel overseas and everywhere they have to be a stamp. This Fijian official passport or Fiji passport, it will still have that.

The challenge is to allow to discuss with the nations that would be involved and some that has been addressed by some nations in relation to passport that a secondary passport that they do, but those passports have been very specific. For example in the UK, it is Her Majesty's Military passport. So, as soon as the border people look at the passport, they I know these are military people, but not here. The words here are "Fijian officials", so it is not limited only to the military, as well as in the US ...

(Hon. Member interjects)

It is written here, Fijian Official.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Read the law.

(Hon. Members interjects)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- It very, very, ambiguous.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- In the US, they give special issuance passport. As soon as they see the passports, they know that these are officials of the US Government, but not here. This does not identify them simply as military because anyone can get hold of this passport and be subject through the same restrictions. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- I give the floor to the Honourable Minister for Defence.

HON. CAPT. T.L. NATUVA.- Madam Speaker, the Honourable Prime Minister, Hon. Leader of the Opposition and Honourable Members of this august House; I wish to rise and contribute to Bill No. 32 of 2016, plus one Amendment Bill 2016.

Let us come back to earth.

(Laughter)

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- We are on earth.

HON. CAPT. T.L. NATUVA.- There is no such thing as covert operation happening here. We are talking about passport, it is an administrative issue. Identification Card (ID) is no longer accepted at the border. This Bill holds high importance to the Ministry of Defence for our participation in peacekeeping operations by deploying personnel from the RFMF, Fiji Police and Correction Service and it is already used in the Middle East. It will not be taken to South Africa or North Africa. The issue here is travelling between the border of Israel and the Arab States.

The introduction of this new category passport called the Fijian official passport will allow vast improvements in the current travelling prevention faced by our peacekeeping personnel deployed especially in the Middle East.

Madam Speaker, I have personally experienced this difficulty during my tour to the Middle East last year. Fortunately, through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the delegation and I were granted non-stamped Israel visa to allow travel through the borders of Lebanon, Egypt and Israel unopposed.

Still today, to have an Israel visa stamped on your passport restricts travel, only within Israel and not to other Arab nations that Fiji Peacekeepers serve, although in close proximity. Out of the 500 plus personnel serving in the Golan Heights under UNDOF, unfortunately of the Israel side of Alpha and in Lebanon under UNIFIL, only 50 personnel were apparently granted non-stamped Israel visa due to their policies. They only allowed 50. These hamper the operations, especially of our uniformed personnel, where our engineers are deployed to operate in Northern Syria, on the borders of Lebanon, Syria and Israel and also restrict travel to the Fiji Contingent Leadership echelon in UNDOF that holds the Fiji Contingent Commander of both UNDOF and UNIFIL.

This passport acts to the similar transition and travel from the Commander level to the most junior deployed rifleman or serving personnel dismissing an administrative burden, enabling the contingent to focus on a primary of peacekeeping. There are also cases where people are repatriated on medical grounds and it is not only when they are going for peacekeeping operation and this is where the passport will be useful.

Therefore, Madam Speaker, with those words, I voice my support towards the Passport (Amendment) Bill 2016.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I now give the floor to the Honourable Nabulivou.

HON. A. NABULIVOU.- Thank you, Madam Speaker.

There is a lot of misunderstanding on this House about this Bill. This is only the amended Bill to the Passport Act 2002, Bill No. 32 of 2016. Bill No. 32 of 2016 is sensible pragmatic response to difficulties and risks that are experienced by the Republic Fiji Military Forces (RFMF). Persons travelling across Middle East countries who are either active intelligence or hostile to each other, it is like my fellow Honourable Member has already alluded to, at all times the safety and security of RFMF peacekeeping personnel should be paramount so far as reasonably possible. Local resentment and delayed passage through borders of such personnel need to be avoided. This new category of official passport comes with the sensitive control as to how, where and what by, whom they may be used and issued.

With that contribution, Madam Speaker, I thought the background is clear, that is the only official stamped passports at the border, they stop and cease. That is why we need to amend this Passport Act, Bill No. 32 of 2016.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I give the floor to the Honourable Niumataiwalu.

HON. M.A. NIUMATAIWALU.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to support the Bill before the House. As a former Council Member of the International Freedom of Expression, we had a council meeting in Lebanon in 2011 and as a normal citizen of Fiji. When we went to Lebanon, they wanted to check whether we had stamps by the Israel Government if not they would not have allowed us into Lebanon, and that is why I stand to support this Bill, being a normal citizen of Fiji and seeing the reality that is needed for our soldiers because my son was also a soldier and he faced the problems when came to Abu Dhabi. They had to wait for a few days before they could be allowed to come back to Fiji. So this Bill before the House is very relevant and I support the Bill.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I give the floor to Honourable Salote Radrodoro.

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to make a contribution to the Bill and my contribution will focus on the intent of the Bill in regards to the provision of safe travel between borders of hostile countries.

Madam Speaker, I find this reasoning is very weak and it is not properly justified in the Bill. If I may share a personal experience, when I was still in the service with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and with the Diplomatic passport I went to Tehran for a WIPO meeting and I was detained at the airport. I raise this because as we know each country have their own immigration laws, and also to highlight that even with the diplomatic passport it did not allow for ease of travel.

So, Madam Speaker, my question is, will this special issue of official passport will really facilitate the ease of travel for our peacekeepers? If that has been done to those holding diplomatic passports and also I see it more the responsibility of the UN agencies to facilitate the ease of travel between borders for the peacekeepers...

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- because the peacekeepers are there on the call of the United Nations, and it is their responsibility to facilitate that ease of travel. I do not see it at as the responsibility of the Fiji Government and on that I ask the question, who will be paying for this official passport?

(Hon. Members interject)

HON. S.V. RADRODRO.- Who will be paying for the official passport and also now that we are beginning to withdraw our soldiers from Sinai; is there a real need? Therefore, Madam Speaker, I strongly recommend that this Bill be taken to the Committee so that the Committee calls for consultation so that UN agencies and those countries that also have peacekeepers in those countries can come and contribute and help us in having to ascertain the real need for this passport or otherwise. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I give the floor the Honourable Netani Rika.

HON. LT. COL. N. RIKA.- Madam Speaker, I rise to make my short contribution to the Passport (Amendment) Bill, Bill No. 32 of 2016.

Madam Speaker, the Passport (Amendment) Bill 2016 amends the Passport Act 2002. The Passport Act 2002 makes fresh provision for the issuance of and production of passport by persons leaving or entering Fiji Islands and for other related matters.

Madam Speaker, the Bill intends to amend the Passport Act 2002 by making provision to:

1. Introduce a new category of passport to be called "The Fijian Official Passport" which will be issued to members of the Disciplined Forces travelling on peacekeeping duties.
2. Providing guidelines for the use of the Fijian Official Passport.
3. Cancelling the Fijian Official Passport where the holders of the passport cease to be a Member of the Disciplined Force.
4. Making provision for conviction on the misuse, falsification of issuance of the Fijian Official Passport to any other person or any other purpose contrary to the intention of issuing the passport.

Madam Speaker, I beg to differ with the speakers from the outside of the House. It is not a covert operation as alluded to earlier, they are just exaggerating on the issue.

Madam Speaker, the whole purpose of this exercise is to provide easy and safe access for our peacekeepers who are serving the operational centres to travel safely between the borders of hostile countries in the Middle East.

Madam Speaker, once being a peacekeeper, the experience of going through the border check was something we often dreaded because we could be stopped at any time by Immigration or Border Security, denying our much needed access. It was often a cause of physical, emotional and physiological stress, especially after spending three stressful months in the operational centre. These breaks were those that each personnel look forward to as it was a time to recuperate and refresh before another round of duties.

Madam Speaker, if a peacekeeper is denied access, then he or she has to return to the operational theatre and continue working. Often, it was a cause of unnecessary depressing situation on both, the personnel and administration of its negative impact as they try to work within the given situation or better, rise above it and anticipating good luck in the next access attempt.

Madam Speaker, it is human instincts that when someone is denied of an opportunity such as this, new ideas would always come up on how to try and convince the Immigration or Border Security to provide access. The Fijian peacekeepers have been very skilful in this regard.

Madam Speaker, one of the strategies that have worked well overtime was to learn and use the basic Arabic language with each gestures and expression together with our “*bula*” smile that had worked well countless times.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. LT. COL. N. RIKA.- in response to the access attempt if you get a smile and the phrase ‘Fiji good’ from the border control, you know that your prayers have been answered and access chance is about 99 percent.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. LT. COL. N. RIKA.- Madam Speaker, the Honourable Shadow Minister of Defence on the other side of the House is a retired peace keeper, an expert negotiator and strategies in this area.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. LT. COL. N. RIKA.- Madam Speaker, you have to be there to know and understand the situation of peace keepers go through. The inception of our peace keeping operation in the Middle East was in 1978 and now this year 2016, they are introducing this Passport Amended Bill. It has been 38 years, Madam Speaker, we applaud this Government for introducing this Bill for the benefit of our peacekeepers.

Madam Speaker, the passing of this Bill is a great lift forward for our disciplinary forces and the way of showing our appreciation to fellow peacekeeping heroes. I would request all the Honourable Members of this august House to support this Bill for the benefit of our peace keepers.

Madam Speaker, I would end my short contribution with a bible verse from Mathew Chapter 5, Verse 9:

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”

Madam Speaker, I fully support this Bill and commend this Bill to the House and I also commend all the peacekeepers out there in the Middle East and in the African Continent and their families at home for their commitment to world peace.

Madam Speaker, for the retired peacekeepers, your commitment was not in vain. Thank you, and God bless Fiji.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I now give the floor to the Honourable Viliame Gavoka.

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. Let me contribute to the debate today.

We all travel and I am trying to understand how you approach an immigration station and you have two passports in your suitcase. You bring one out and you keep one in the bag. I am trying to figure this out. How does it help, you get through if you are known to be a peacekeeper, in the United Nation and you are a Fijian, how does it help you across the border with another passport? I am having problems understanding this. You are still a Fijian, and you are still a peacekeeper and they know that you travel through Israel and here we hear that we are the most likable people in that part of the world, why can we not use our charm, you know the big Fijian smile.

(Chorus of Interjections)

HON. V.R. GAVOKA.- Madam Speaker, the Honourable Rika has said that and I know and I hear stories when other nations troops have difficulties with the Arabs, we would walk in with our big smile and then we sit down with them and things would be totally different. We know that to be true but the mechanics of this is very

You know the danger, Madam Speaker, one of our guys maybe caught in a compromising situation and they finding these two passports, they think he is James Bond or something and they will execute him. You know who carries numerous passports, James Bond exactly. This is dangerous and passport to me is very precious, very sacred and I want to protect the integrity of the passport and I do not trust this Government, I do not trust them because there are people now in Fiji, with Fijian passport who cannot even speak English. So, I do not trust this Government to manage this properly and they will destroy the integrity of the Fiji passport.

Madam Speaker, this is a ludicrous idea, let us not pass it. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER.- I now give the floor to the Honourable Dulakiverata.

HON. J. DULAKIVERATA.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. I just want to contribute to this Bill Number 32 of 2016.

If peacekeepers are the children of God, what do we have to fear? Madam Speaker, the intent of this Bill, is it based on import? Based on the submission by the interim of the multi-national forces on what they face? Is it based on that, that we need this passport? I do not think so and this Government is making

friends with all the Arab countries. Why do we have to have another new passport, they all know you are from Fiji. Why do you have to have another passport?

The question is, Madam Speaker, if some of our troops are caught or are taken hostage in another area outside the operational area with the new passport, who will be responsible for their release? Is it the United Nation? Is it the Fiji Government? Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. I now give the floor to the Honourable Samuela Vunivalu.

HON. S.B. VUNIVALU.- Thank you, Madam Speaker. I also rise to support the Bill to Amend the Passport 2002. I think most of the people who are raising their issue today, they are talking nonsense. They do not even know the places where I have been from. I still have here my ID card, United Nation ID Card. Listen to the disadvantages of this card and I have got the experience about it. Can you see this passport face here, we do change it with modern technology but my name is still here. I can put some other name or photo but the real owner of this ID card is still in the field but someone else has crossed the border. See the disadvantage of this ID card, that is what we are doing and some of the people are gaining money out of this for your information. This is the disadvantage of this ID card. By using the passport, we will not be doing that.

Madam Speaker, we have come across this, Madam Speaker, in Lebanon, I am an investigator in the war field and this is one of the sources of income for the Ghanian people. They receive extra money from Lebanon to cross to Israel and I am one of those who stand in the border, we managed to catch them because we know their face but different face is on the ID card and we managed to catch these Ghanaians. That is the disadvantage of this ID card. That is why I am saying that people talking about the border, you have to use a passport to cross the border anywhere in the world.

Secondly when you have worked in one area for one year, you are allowed one month leave in any other place in the world that is where this passport will be used. That is why I support the Bill before the House. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Karavaki you have one minute.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Madam Speaker, first of all, Clause 3 of the Bill which relates to the amendment of. I mean, it introduced Section 9(a). I would suggest Madam Speaker, that that should be tidied up because the application should be made by a member of the Disciplined Force and the passport must be issued to a member of the Disciplined Force. This one here is not really clear, anyone can apply and then can be a member of the Disciplined Force later, and then when the passport is issued and issued to that person after he had joined the Disciplined Force, but he can apply without being a member of a Disciplined Force. I am suggesting Madam Speaker, if that could be looked at so that it is tidied up and it is a security for any application to be made.

Secondly, Madam Speaker, the peacekeepers, if they are really the recipient of blessing the Lord said himself, "The peace I give you is not of what the world can give you". That peace comes from God, the world does not give that peace, Madam Speaker. If they are the recipients of this peace, they do not need the passport because that peace can be transferred to those at the border and with that peace, they would not experience stress while waiting at the border. If they have that peace but, I guess, Madam Speaker, that the peace that they are talking about is the peace of this world. It is not of the peace of the Kingdom to come.

(Chorus of interjections)

Madam Speaker, I see this can also be duplication because the Honourable Minister for Defence has not explained why the UN Card is not being used anymore.

HON. MEMBER.- It is unacceptable!

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- No, he did not explain it, why? And we are in this House talking about this, many information has not been disclosed to us by the Honourable Attorney General and we know not what is going on. How can we compile, Madam Speaker, a list of these nations that will accept this passport. Now, the Honourable Vunivalu said that with this passport, they can go anywhere in the world, it does not say in this Bill. The Bill says “only the listed nations”. They cannot go to anywhere in the world under that.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you Honourable Karavaki.

I now give the floor to the Honourable Attorney General for his right of a reply.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, I would like to clarify a number of issues that had been raised by the other side. Honourable Nawaikula keeps on saying that it must be sent to the Committees so that the experts can look into it. It is the input of the experts, the experts are the people who are on the ground, the troops our peacekeepers, who are the experts. They are the ones on the ground. Our Ministry of Defence are the experts. Our Immigration people are the experts. They are the same people who would have come and told you exactly what they have told us in the formulation of this Bill, they are the experts, not the other side. They are the ones who have had the input into this, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, we have a specialist officer in our Prune Office in New York. The Honourable Nawaikula makes a lot of frequent visits to New York, he knows that by himself. Also, they have had the input also and it is with the assistance of all of these experts that this Bill has been put together.

Madam Speaker, Honourable Tikoca, who unfortunately has walked out but he may have been in the Middle East but I think that was in the 1970s or 1980s. Peacekeeping has evolved tremendously since then and all the troops who have been there recently can testify to that. The Honourable Prime Minister can testify to that, who was the Commander of the RFMF. The Peacekeeping Missions have evolved completely, so Madam Speaker...

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Speaker, may I rise on a Point of Order; it appears the Honourable Minister is talking to me, he should face this side.

(Laughter)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, Honourable Nawaikula has raised the other issue that is why I was looking at him but I am talking to the Honourable Speaker, directly through her. Sure, I will look at the Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- No, no, you can look at him, you are doing it correctly.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you. Can I look this side?

HON. SPEAKER.- Yes, you may.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, the fact is modern day peacekeeping has evolve completely. The issue, of course, is between the sovereign Fijian State and other States within which our troops can operate, whether they are Middle Eastern countries or other States that exists where our troops go to.

Madam Speaker, a number of anomalies have been stated by the other side. If I draw the attention to Clause 9(b)(3), it says, I quote: “A member of the Disciplined Force must not use his or her Fijian official passport for any personal travel”. I think the Honourable Tikoca talked about; “There is not a holiday, they are going to Russia and all of that.” No, this specifically restricts that, Madam Speaker.

HON. OPPOSITION MEMBERS.- Honourable Vunivalu!

Madam Speaker, whoever it was that said that from the other side, the back row -the three wise men, I do not know which one said it. Madam Speaker, the point is, it restricts them.

Similarly, Madam Speaker, it says, they are talking about the safety and security. Similarly it says: “Upon their return, they must give those passports back,” but even before that it says in Clause 9 (b)(4); “A member of the disciplined Force who contravenes subsection (2) or (3) shall be subject to such disciplinary action as may be determined by the Commander of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces, the Commissioner of Police or the Commissioner of the Fiji Corrections Services, as the case may be”. So, there are various checks and balances that have been put in, precisely for the reason because we have experts who have put this Bill together in the formulation of this.

Madam Speaker, it addresses a specific issue that relates to our peacekeepers at the moment on the ground. It is for their assistance. This is why when introducing the Bill, we had said this, is “why bring under Clause 51.” At the moment, the practice is we are giving them emergency passports, it can expire Madam Speaker, it has a 12 month life. The idea is to ensure that our troops who we need to look after and they are performing this wonderful service are actually given the facilities.

Madam Speaker, references have been made by the Honourable Radrodro and her experience in Iran. We are not in Iran, Madam Speaker, and that cannot be used logically to extend to what we are facing at the moment.

Madam Speaker, similarly Honourable Prem Singh, who obviously, again the expert in this area from sugarcane farming, he is now talking about other categories. Madam Speaker, diplomatic passports have been issued.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Speaker, may I rise on a Point of Order. I have umbrage to that comment because this is not the first time the Honourable Attorney General has done this, if he can confine his remarks and his response and not indulge in personal comments.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Attorney General, can you just withdraw that statement?

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Again, there is the issue raised about that we are all God's children, so what is there to fear? However, from the other side, we constantly get xenophobia comments. We get saying that if we do this, there will be a threat to our religion, threat to our country. Madam Speaker, it has nothing to do with that, it is about issuing an official passport to ensure that our troops get looked after, they are able to cross the borders without any specific issues that are currently facing them. Madam Speaker, the reality is that this passport does not mean there will be covert operations. It is all very very sinister from the other side. They always make it out as if there is some ulterior motive.

It is all very simple issue, Madam Speaker, there are various checks and balances that have been put in, in this particular amendment to the Bill where you have the respective Commanders of the respective Disciplined Forces, who have checks and balances on this, also the Director of Immigration have checks and balances of this. There is a requirement by the peacekeepers when they come back to return this passport. These are various offence provisions that have been built in, Madam Speaker, but all of it at the same time, gives the flaccidity to our peacekeepers, the ability to travel within these borders because they need to do so and in a manner that is recognised and it guarantees the safety and security, and also without a hassle and the issues that some of the Honourable Members from this side have highlighted.

With those few words, I move the motion that we now vote and approve this Bill.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. There being opposition, Parliament will now vote on the motion.

Question put.

<u>Votes Cast:</u>		
Ayes	:	28
Noes	:	16
Not voted	:	6

Motion agreed to.

Honourable Members, thank you very much for today's sitting. Thank you for your contributions to the...

WITHDRAWAL OF DEROGATORY COMMENTS

HON. ROKO T.T.S. DRAUNIDALO.- May I rise on a Point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam Speaker, under Standing Order 18, I believe you had asked the Honourable Attorney-General to withdraw his derogatory comment to the Honourable Singh, which he did not.

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Be human, just stand up and apologise.

HON. SPEAKER.- The Honourable Prem Singh took offence to the statement that you made against him, and I asked you to withdraw that. Just say, 'I withdraw'.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, I fail to understand which is the derogatory part that I made.

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Prem Singh, will you just repeat that statement?

HON. P. SINGH.- Madam Speaker, I had taken umbrage to the comment of the Attorney-General insofar when he said; “from cane farmer, now he has become an expert on passports.”

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- I said, ‘cane farming’.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Attorney-General?

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Madam Speaker, it is the same as was said on the three wise men.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Attorney-General?

(Hon. N. Nawaikula interjects)

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. SPEAKER.- Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. N. NAWAIKULA.- Like the three wise men. It’s bad.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- As I had ruled previously, if an Honourable Member says words that may sound offensive to the person that is targeted and he raises a point of order that he took offence to the statement, I will ask the person that said it to withdraw it and the reason why I asked you to withdraw. Just say, ‘I withdraw it’.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, I really cannot hear because they are yelling.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- Just say sorry!

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Madam Speaker, I can withdraw any comment, I do not have a problem. I just need to understand what am I withdrawing and why am I withdrawing? Honourable Prem Singh is a farmer. Honourable Prem Singh has made comments about the sugar cane farming industry. Honourable Prem Singh, Madam Speaker, I said from....

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.-... a farmer and a farming perspective has now become an expert on passports.

Madam Speaker, I have Honourable Members on the other side say lots of things about my legal acumen. I have never stood up and said; ‘Oh no. I am a good lawyer!’ Have I objected to that, Madam Speaker?

HON. M.D. BULITAVU.- Just say, sorry!

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- That is part and parcel.

HON. S.D. KARAVAKI.- You're a great man!

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- Can I finish, please?

Madam Speaker, if I had said that Honourable Prem Singh is incompetent, if I had said that he does not know what he is talking about....

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- ... then that is derogatory. If he asks me to withdraw that, I will withdraw that, Madam Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER.- Please withdraw.

HON. A. SAYED-KHAIYUM.- I withdraw that if he has taken that as a meaning, but I never said that, Madam Speaker. If he takes offence at that, then I can withdraw it.

(Chorus of interjections)

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you, he has withdrawn that, Honourable Prem Singh. Thank you.

Now, that I have announced the results of the vote, we will move on with the item on the order paper.

SECRETARY-GENERAL.- A Bill for an Act to amend the Passport (Amendment) Bill, 2016, (Bill No. 32 of 2016) enacted by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji.

HON. SPEAKER.- Thank you. Parliament is now adjourned, and I wish you a good restful evening. We will see you tomorrow morning when we will resume at 9.30 a.m.

The Parliament adjourned at 3.49 p.m.